

Billy Joel's Money Madness ▾ *Bonfire* Scapegoats ▾ Frank Rich Fumes

SPV

The Tyranny of Trendiness

WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO EAT,
WEAR AND THINK IN 1992—
WHETHER YOU LIKE IT
OR NOT

Kooky Asymmetry

*Third World
Primitivism*

*Studied
Dirtiness*

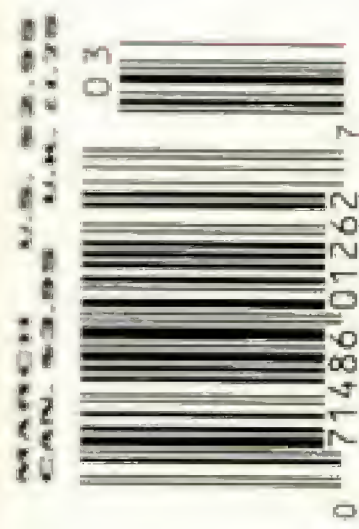
Blue-collar Chic

*Laugh-In
Revivalism*

PLUS

Dirty Dozen 1991: The Iraqi Adventure
Roy Cohn's Tale from the Crypt

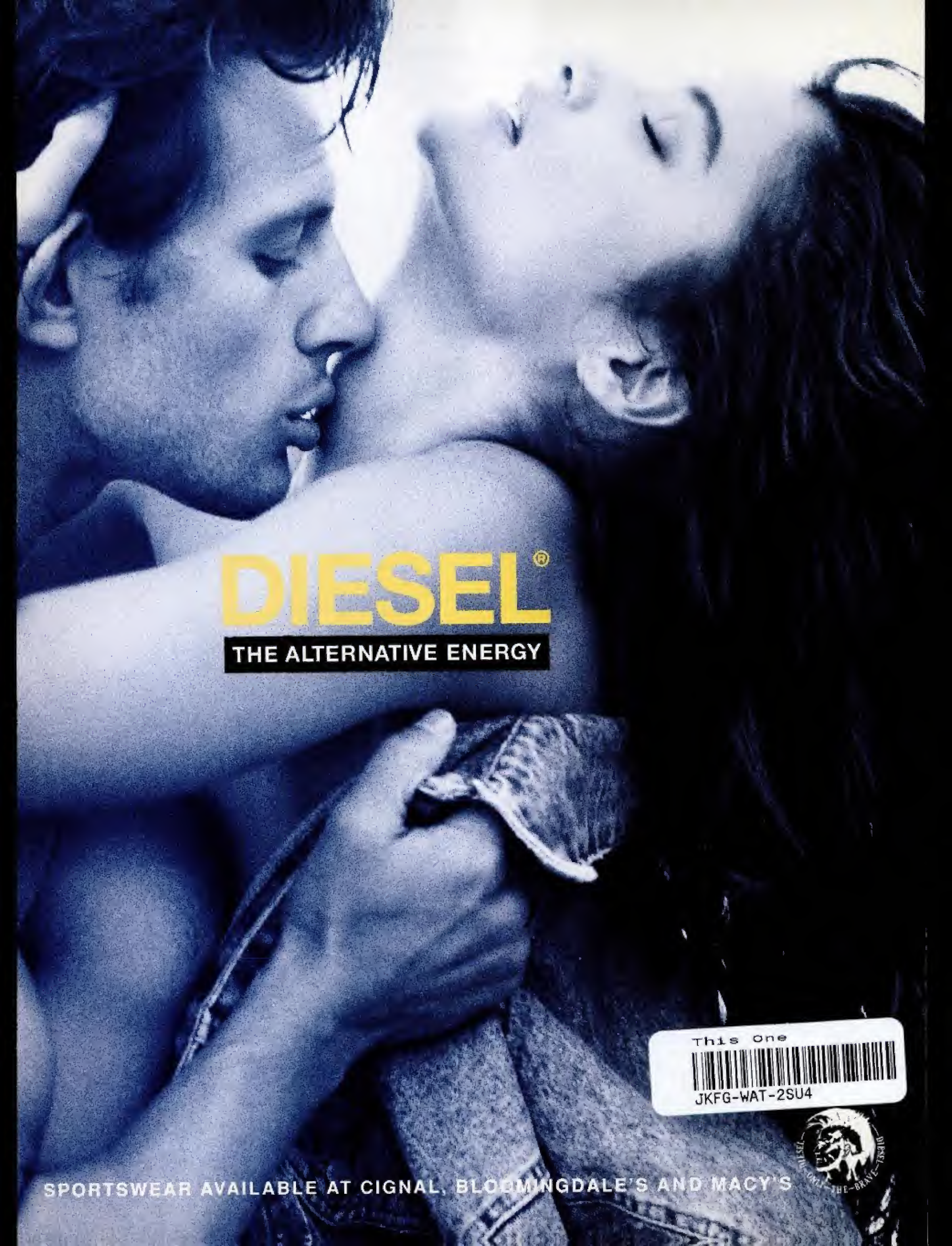
Jamie Lee Curtis
as That Trend Victim





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NAKED CITY

► The color of Spielberg's money and David Letterman's peevishness. Save the aisle seat: Monheit's back, and we've got him! The Saddam nobody knows. What Joey Heatherton says to her answering machine. A special Gulf War fun kit, including the Dirty Dozen's next — and most dangerous — mission..... 22

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"I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE, AND IT IS PUCE WITH AQUAMARINE ACCENTS"

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YOUR MOTHER WEARS DHARMA BOOTS

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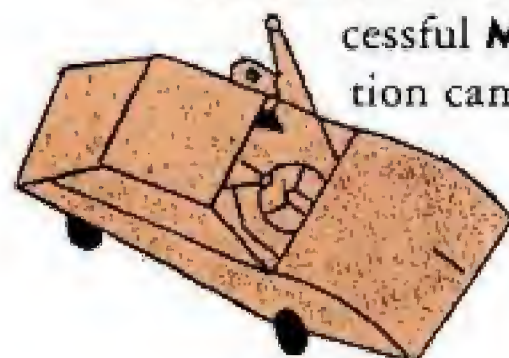
OVAL OFFICE DIARY: NOTES TOWARD A NONFICTION NOVEL

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THE COVER
Anything But Love's Jamie Lee Curtis
photographed by Bonnie Schiffman.
Styled by Irene Albright.
(Further information on page 69.)





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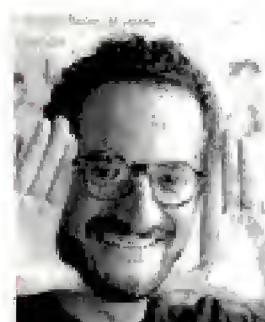
LYNDA EDWARDS, the author of this issue's article about professional trend spotters, is a Washington, D.C.-based writer who has contributed to *Regardies*, *Dossier* and *City Paper*, in which an earlier version of the article appeared. She admits to having been intimidated by the handsome young Frenchman whom she accompanied through New York as he stalked the hot trends of 1992, and she says her self-confidence was not bolstered by his assertion that her own look was all wrong and reflected a "modernist dialecticism."



Like Billy Joel, whose disastrous management choices he chronicles in this issue, **FRED GOODMAN** is a no-nonsense New York fellow whose name appears frequently in *Rolling Stone*. But that's where the similarity ends; Goodman has

CONTRIBUTORS

a beard, is a contributing editor at *RS* and has never, to his regret, shared an intimate moment with Christie Brinkley.



STEVEN GUARNACCIA's illustrations have accompanied our Review of Reviewers column for the last year. He also illustrated *SPY*'s June 1987 map of

The Russian Tea Room, which he unconsciously allowed the publishers of *50 Maps of New York* (H. M. Gousha, 1990) to reproduce without first asking the *SPY* editors' permission, let alone giving the magazine credit in the book. An inveterate palindrome enthusiast, Guarnaccia has illustrated William Irvine's palindrome book *Madam, I'm Adam* (Scribner's, 1988) and its forthcoming sequel, *If I Had a Hi-Fi*.



New York Post readers know him as "Page Six's **GEORGE RUSH**," the reporter to whom miscreants and divorce lawyers divulge their opinions of other miscreants and divorce lawyers. But Rush, who in this issue writes about a great family feud, has also written for *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone* and *Manhattan, inc.* 3

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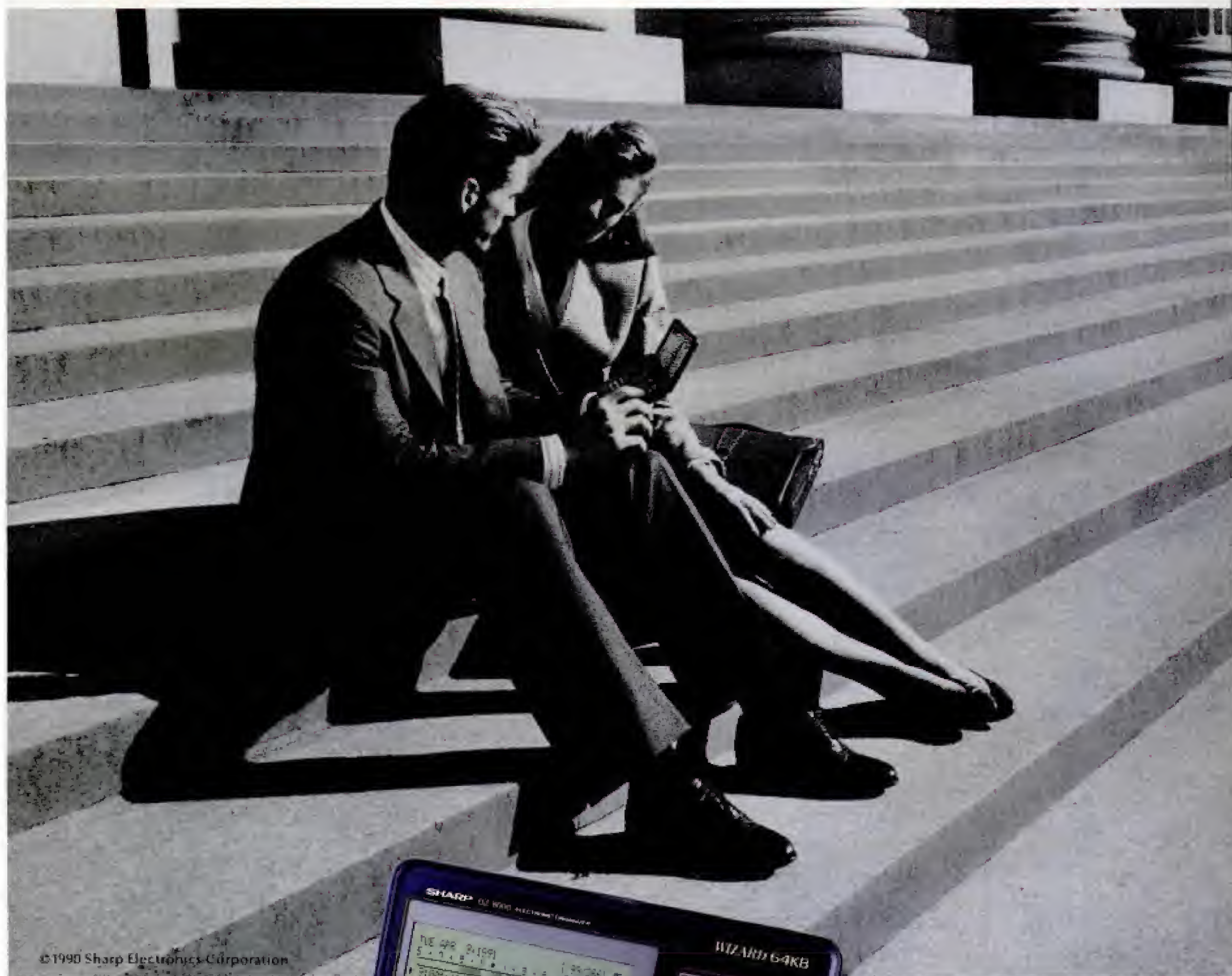
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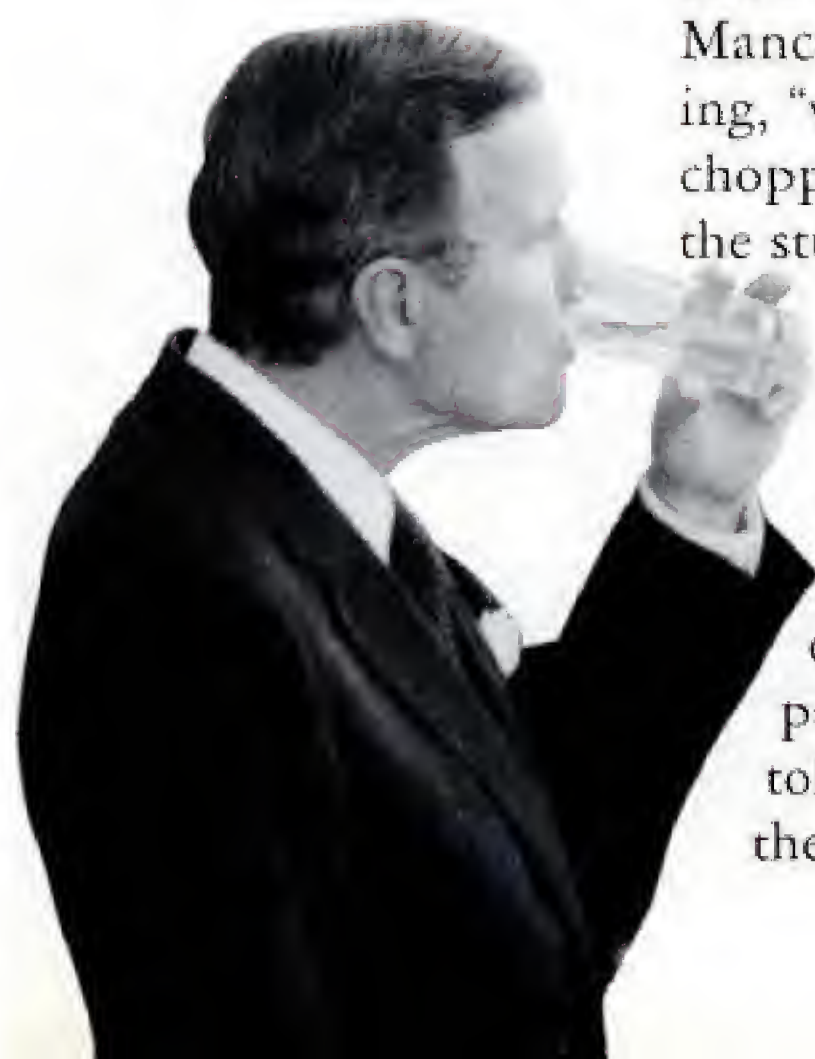
Produced by David Byrne

The following releases appear as well as Night (Grassie) Blues and Contrasts. © 1987 Night Records.



\$400,000, and that's another reason I'm impressed with effectiveness of Mary Boone, his dealer

"It always impresses me that someone could say with a straight face, 'This painting is with Mary.' — Eric Fischl, whose paintings sell for up to \$450,000, on the



FORWARD, MARCH! ABOUT-FACE! COMPANY, HALT! CLEAN THE SAND OUT OF your firing mechanism with a Q-Tip, now! ☺☺ So: is the fighting over yet? We hope so — there are thumb-sucking post-war Op-Ed pieces to write, movie-of-the-week treatments to pitch, Colin Powell presidential PACs to establish. Like



all quarterly-earnings-obsessed, baked-potato-microwaving Americans, we're in a hurry. After waiting *five long months*



for the sanctions to make Saddam Hussein capitulate unconditionally, we lost our patience with the embargo thing. Diplomacy? We had almost no patience at all for that — six hours in Geneva, no surrender, forget it. And as actual combat started it's a good thing we were winning, because the American people had summoned the resolve to wage war for about a month, maybe six weeks, and to accept only light casualties (that is, a body count in the high three figures) before losing patience with the whole damned business. ☺☺

"Let's shock everybody," Mario Cuomo said recently. "Let's tell everybody the whole truth." Quite so: this war is proving costly, and not just in lives. The unpleasantness in the Gulf has wreaked havoc in the junk-mail business, according to the *Times* — January is

Forward, march!

ordinarily a great time to sell mutual funds and Civil War-themed toaster ovens through the mail, but this year *forget it*. Then there's Hollywood: with a million real soldiers engaged in the most spectacular military adventure in half a century, *Top Gun II* and *Die Hard 3* and *Rambo IV* seem moot. "Now that everyone is doing it," Paramount Pictures chairman Frank Mancuso said recently about big-budget moviemaking, "we don't want to." After all, the government's chopper-and-cruise-missile special effects are real, the stuntmen are cheap (SAG stuntmen earn more than \$431



a day, Army privates about \$34), Sly Stallone doesn't get a front-end piece of the gross, and the dailies are on free TV. ☺☺ Just before the war started, a group of Canadians was very happy to be leaving Baghdad. "We're going to party naked on the roof and pour champagne on our heads," one of them told a reporter. Naked? Champagne? This is a *Canadian*? He also said he called home and told his wife, in preparation for his homecoming, to "fill the fridge full of beer." Yes, definitely Canadian. ☺☺ Zany,

bibulous, eighties-style frivolity amid nineties-style anxiety: liberated Canadians bathing in champagne, football-playoff spectators chanting *U-S-A*, Super Bowl XXV winners bathing in champagne, and, just as the war (Middle East VII?) began, a New York auction house trying to get \$30,000 for a broken, empty wine bottle that Thomas Jefferson may have owned (back in 1989, unbroken and full, it was priced at \$519,750). "We are ready to set the record for a broken, empty wine bottle," said the hopeful president of the auction house. But it didn't sell at all—the eighties really *are* over.

Let's shock everybody, let's tell everybody the whole truth: in the eighties we started selling the private sector to rich foreigners; in the nineties we're leasing the public sector to rich foreigners. Last fall Japan agreed to pay us and the other *gaijin* \$4 billion to conduct a Persian Gulf war, but now, well, the check is in the mail. Tokyo had, when combat began, come through with only half a billion, and that figure includes some fax machines. "Please don't expect that right after the shooting starts, we come up with a figure right away," a Japanese Foreign

Ministry spokesman said, reassuringly.

The nineties: fax machines as war matériel, pro-fur coloring books for kids (*Animals and Us*, distributed by an organization of fur farmers), household pets as combat volunteers. Well, not *volunteers* exactly, and it's *simulated* combat, but some 700 brave American cats have done their bit for Kuwaiti freedom. For several years the Army had been shooting pellets into cats' heads, at a cost of almost \$3,000 per wounded cat, in order to improve treatment of battlefield head injuries. To us it all sounds very well grounded medically (*Mom, Dad—I fed Vanish to Rover only to learn how we can better defend against chemical-weapons attacks*), but animal lovers are complaining. All we know is, we'd love to have our people talk to the Army's people. We're thinking feature-length cartoon, we're thinking funny plush figures, we're thinking an *Unarmed Cats on Ice* revue.

Revelations of nutty Pentagon experiments, a controversial war involving half a million Americans, a Son of Sam imitator at large in Queens, New York City on the skids, cheap Manhattan apartments, a Democratic governor with



presidential ambitions saying *Let's tell everybody the whole truth*, Farrah Fawcett on series TV. Sound familiar? Seen any big sideburns lately? What's more, *A Clockwork Orange*, the great seventies movie, is now being

performed live: After Connie Chung broadcast a story suggesting that cosmetic breast implants are not a wholly good idea, Manhattan plastic surgeon Andrew Ordon said, "I think Connie Chung's kneecaps should be broken," and he didn't mention anything about anesthesia. And then, as a judge prepared to sentence the 14-year-old droog who set fire to a 12-year-old Brooklyn boy, the court-appointed psychiatrist testified that the 14-year-old "is even surprised he was arrested for it.... He derives fun from exerting his dominance over others through violence or intimidation."

Like Saddam, a little like Bush—both of them men who came to prominence in the seventies, when we last experienced war and recession simultaneously. This time, the recession means the public can't fully concentrate on the war, and the war means the nation's leaders can't

If money can't
buy happiness,
why do all dates
begin at the cash
machine?

quite focus on the recession. "I don't think it's the end of the world even if we have a recession," said Nick Brady, the secretary of the Treasury. "We'll pull back out of it again. No big deal." (*No big deal*: you would never guess that Brady served in the Bush administration.)

Even if we have a recession? The Dating Committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research, the economists in charge of determining when recessions begin and end, would have ordinarily waited awhile to declare this decline real. But like all Americans today—from the ones who summed up the nineties in 1989 to the ones who started Persian Gulf wars in 1991—they got impatient. So six of America's most august, sober experts talked on a conference call and decided—*Hey, c'mon, Feldstein, you weenie*—to just go for it. "We did not want to be viewed as laggards," said Victor Zarnowitz of the University of Chicago. So they told everybody the whole truth, and it didn't shock anybody.




Too many mung-bean sprouts, too much camping gear: the seventies were about a kind of showy ecological consciousness—or, rather, ecoconsciousness. In Maryland recently, after a state work crew mistakenly cut down seven healthy trees—including an 80-foot-tall cedar—instead of the single diseased tree they were supposed to cut down, Governor Donald Schaefer staged a photo op at the cedar stump and announced, "I'm tree-conscious."

But wait—if the nineties were like the seventies, wouldn't there be, like, lawsuits against schools over the right to wear long hair? In Bastrop, Texas, Zachariah Toungeate, an eight-year-old with a 1970s name, hasn't set anyone on fire so far, but he does refuse to cut his seven-inch-long ponytail, so he must spend each school day confined to a 10-by-13-foot isolation room that the school calls an "alternative education setting." (Gulf War body bags, by the way, are called "human remains pouches.") Zachariah's parents—his mother is

named September—are suing.

So maybe the nineties are a little like the seventies, but, I mean, back in the seventies, Ronald Reagan was a joke... Not long ago, Reagan saw a *Daily Variety* obituary for the husband of an old friend. He phoned to offer his sympathies and left the following message on her machine: "Uh, Joy, this is Ronnie. Ronnie Reagan. I guess you know who I am. I just read about your loss, uh, uh—I live out here now, you know, uh, uh—and wanted to tell you how sorry I am. Uh, uh—if you want to call me, here's my number." He recited the first three digits, and then went blank. "I'll call you back," Reagan said, and he hung up.

So let's shock everybody, let's tell everybody the whole truth: we are impatient to relive the recent past; the nineties are the seventies on fast forward, with Bob Kerrey or Cuomo as the fin de siècle Jimmy Carter, and SPY—remember *New Times*? Remember when *National Lampoon* was good and *Rolling Stone* was great? Remember 1977?—just stayin' alive, stayin' alive. 




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DEAR EDITORS I was struck by a major inaccuracy concerning *CBS Morning News* in your February *Webs* column [by Laureen Hobbs]. Enclosed is a copy of the ratings report for the program for 1983, produced by CBS and sent to the stations at the end of the year. When Diane Sawyer and Bill Kurtis anchored the show, we [Ferrante was the show's executive producer at the time] moved into second place and improved the audience by 21 percent. (What happened after that was largely the result of the network economy and mysterious happenings I have yet to fathom.)

Bob Ferrante

Washington, D.C.

The ratings report shows that in 1983 CBS Morning News outrated the Today show for seven weeks and tied it for seven weeks. That leaves 38 weeks with a firm grip on third (and last) place. No wonder, then, that in the cumulative ratings for 1983, CBS Morning News turned up...third.

DEAR EDITORS Shame on you for publishing those gory excerpts from Bret Easton Ellis's

LETTERS TO SPY

new book ["How Bret Ellis Turned Michael Korda Into Larry Flynt," Books, by Todd Stiles, December]. You ruined my breakfast. I suggest in the future you run a warning sticker alongside any such gruesome articles.

Becki Bronk

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

DEAR EDITORS There currently exists a handful of youngish genre writers who have written equally gruesome, gritty novels, utilizing deviant sex and extreme violence. They've been around for three or four years. They've even got a name, "splatterpunks." They've also come under fire for being cynical and misogynistic. But, to my knowledge, none of them has ever been offered a \$300,000 advance. So what's the big deal? Ellis's *American Psycho* is hardly going to cause the fall of America. Sounds like the free press is once again using its First Amendment rights to beat up on freedom of expression. Now, *that's* cynical!

Nancy A. Collins

New Orleans, Louisiana

DEAR EDITORS I have a nagging suspicion Ellis has stolen my masterpiece, *American Psychopathic Feminist*. An excerpt from my work:

Fashionable as always, I don an Escada silk suit, Hermès scarf, Bulgari jewelry and Ferragamo shoes. I dash lashings of Obsession For Men into Brock's bulging, bloodshot eyes, the pupils of which reflect my perfectly Chanel-lipsticked snarl, and shove my Vidal Sassoon hair dryer, turned on full blast, into the gaping cavern of his mouth (if he doesn't look good, I don't look good), which doesn't kill him, so I remove the dryer and replace it with my Conair curling iron, searing his snakelike tongue. One can never get enough of this type of pleasure, so as Trent watches, I gleefully pour molten wax onto his chest hairs. For some reason blood begins to trickle from his nose and ears. Sympathetically, I strategically place New Freedom Maxi Pads into his appropriate orifices. Next I take my cordless Epilady Ultra and skillfully remove each curly, coarse strand of his pubic hair. His cries are sufficiently muffled by the Maxi Pads, and so, undisturbed, I attend to my most delicious duty....

The point of my work is to hyperbolize

the way yuppie women treat men, expressing the insanity of the materialistic 1980s.

Amanda E. Collins

South Orange, New Jersey

DEAR EDITORS We take considerable pride here at *Wigwag* in the level of our penmanship. But the handwriting of department editor Mary Norris is distinguished even amongst ourselves for its fair, free, tough, yet feminine qualities—a pleasure to read and to behold. So I must inform you that when you identify a "crabbed hand" in your *New Yorker* stylebook report ["A Friend Writes...Precisely the Way We Tell Him To," December] as belonging to "ex-copy chief Mary Norris," you are certainly mistaken. It isn't hers.

Samuel E. Schulman

Publisher, *Wigwag*

New York

DEAR EDITORS Proud as I am to have my name mentioned in the company of Lu Burke and

Pardon us a moment while we get a grip. Just now, on the subway, we saw a man reading Abe Rosenthal's column in *The New York Times*, and the man wasn't Abe Rosenthal. So just pardon us a moment; we have the vapors.

FROM THE



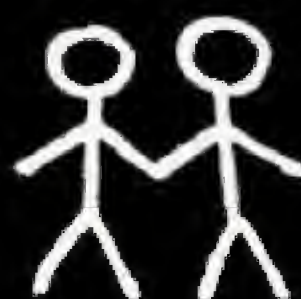
MAIL ROOM

Lately we've been hearing a lot from (1) people submitting examples of published unauthorized homages to

"Separated at Birth?"; (2) people writing to say that letters they'd previously written us never appeared in the magazine even though we'd told them they would; and (3) graduates of Hunter College High School in Manhattan seeking to get in touch with former classmates. To the first group we say, *Thank you, just set them down over there.* To the second, *Are you happy now, Marcus W. Koechig (and others)?* And to the third, *Um, doesn't Hunter have an alumni office?*

Frank M. Kinder writes from Chicago with information regarding whether William Kunstler ("Still Crazy After All These Years," by Jim Traub, September) ever hugged the University of Virginia's former president Edgar Shannon. According to a recent article in the *UVa Alumni News*, Kunstler remembers "embracing Shannon [in the spring of 1970]. It's a very pleasant memory." But Shannon's memory "isn't quite so positive." He "mentions no hug" and even remarks that "Kunstler came as close as you could to inciting a riot." Kinder comments, "I wonder what the other recipients of Kunstler's ministrations thought." Indeed. Anyone with personal recollections of being embraced by Kunstler, or (better yet) whom Kunstler has publicly claimed to have embraced *but who in fact has never entered into a hug with Kunstler*, should contact SPY immediately.

Filippo Berna writes from Sori, Italy, "What I don't like about your magazine is the abundance of insults and prejudices." He encloses an article he wrote for the newsweekly *l'Eco d'Italia* in which it seems he has misread our remarks about Senator Alfonse D'Amato as ridicule of Italian-Americans in general. A terrible misunderstanding! It must be the language problem. We ►



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know we suffer from it ourselves—either that or Signore Berna wrote, elsewhere in his article, that "certainly molten eggs have insinuated their way, directly or indirectly, into colleges with the affairs of political Italians." Oh, why didn't Esperanto take?

"My friend is an avowed Hare Krishna/Aristotelian Dualist and weekend Wu Li dancer who believes the recent crisis in the Middle East is proof of the validity of Nostradamus's prophecies," writes Josh Bassett of Detroit. "I was wondering if maybe you've done some research on the success of his predictions." A weekend Wu Li dancer? We wouldn't trust any of your friend's predictions.

Ricarda Heller of Rego Park, New York, enjoyed "The Gambino Group 1990 Annual Report" (by John Brodie, November) but wants to draw our attention to a forerunner of the article, something called "The Alphonse Capone Enterprises Annual Report 1931." This she describes as "a promotional piece for the Simpson Paper Company in San Francisco, published in 1981." There's nothing shocking about this. We seem to find *all* our best ideas in a folder stuffed with decade-old promotional literature for West Coast paper concerns.

Two mistakes have been brought to our attention by readers. Carolyn Coldwell Sardella of Middletown, New York, notes correctly that in October's Party Poop, Mary Tyler Moore could not possibly be performing a rendition of "Eensy Weensy Spider"; in fact, Moore is apparently performing a rendition of "Itsy Bitsy Spider." And thanks to the Chicago reader who caught an incomplete epithet that appeared in November's "Party Bowl III: SPY's Third Annual Celebrity Pro-Am Ironman Nightlife Decathlon Championship": Shirley Lord Rosenthal, characterized there as a "dirty-book writer," is, of course, a bosomey dirty-book writer.

Arthur S. Harris Jr. of Arlington, Vermont, has asked us to pass along a letter to the editors of *Wigwag*. Harris quotes traveling writer Sousa Jamba first from the September *Wigwag* ("The area is very rocky. [The Livingstons] are not very happy with the influx.... The people in the area are very friendly") and ▶

William Shawn, I feel compelled to let you know that those *New Yorker* index cards were written long before I came to the copy desk, if not before I was born. As for my having a "crabbed hand," feel free to reproduce this letter in holograph, so that readers may judge for themselves.

Mary Norris
Astoria, New York

DEAR EDITORS **E**ver since she was a child, my daughter Mary has had a crabbed hand. You had it exactly right.

Eileen Norris
Cleveland, Ohio

DEAR EDITORS **C**overage of the Time Warner Hamptons Classic Celebrity Pro-Am Ironman Nightlife Decathlon Championship [by John Brodie, Michael Hainey and Leland Scott, November] was truly exciting. Beau "Not Jeff" Bridges appears to have quite a future if he can only bring his endurance levels up to retired champion and commentator Anthony Haden-Guest's

standards. Weaving at the early hour of 2:52 a.m. begs for improvement.

In defense of Mort Zuckerman's competition-losing gaffe, I believe he may indeed have been "hotdogging." His casual reference to having had "some movie people" to lunch the day before may well have been an attempt to have one of his guests ask, "Oh, who was that?" — thereby opening the door to a veritable name- and anecdote-dropping deluge with which he could have run up his score.

Deirdre O'Rourke
Westport, Connecticut

DEAR EDITORS **Y**our November issue contained two unrelated but disturbing articles that caused me to fear for SPY's future. The first, "Paul Smith Shoots Himself," asks the probing question "Is SPY losing its hard edge?" The second is about Clay Felker, who *has* lost his edge ["Voyage to the Bottom of the Newsstand," by Rachel Urquhart].

The basic lesson to be learned from Felker's sad story is that journalistic innovation is short-lived and difficult to repeat or maintain.

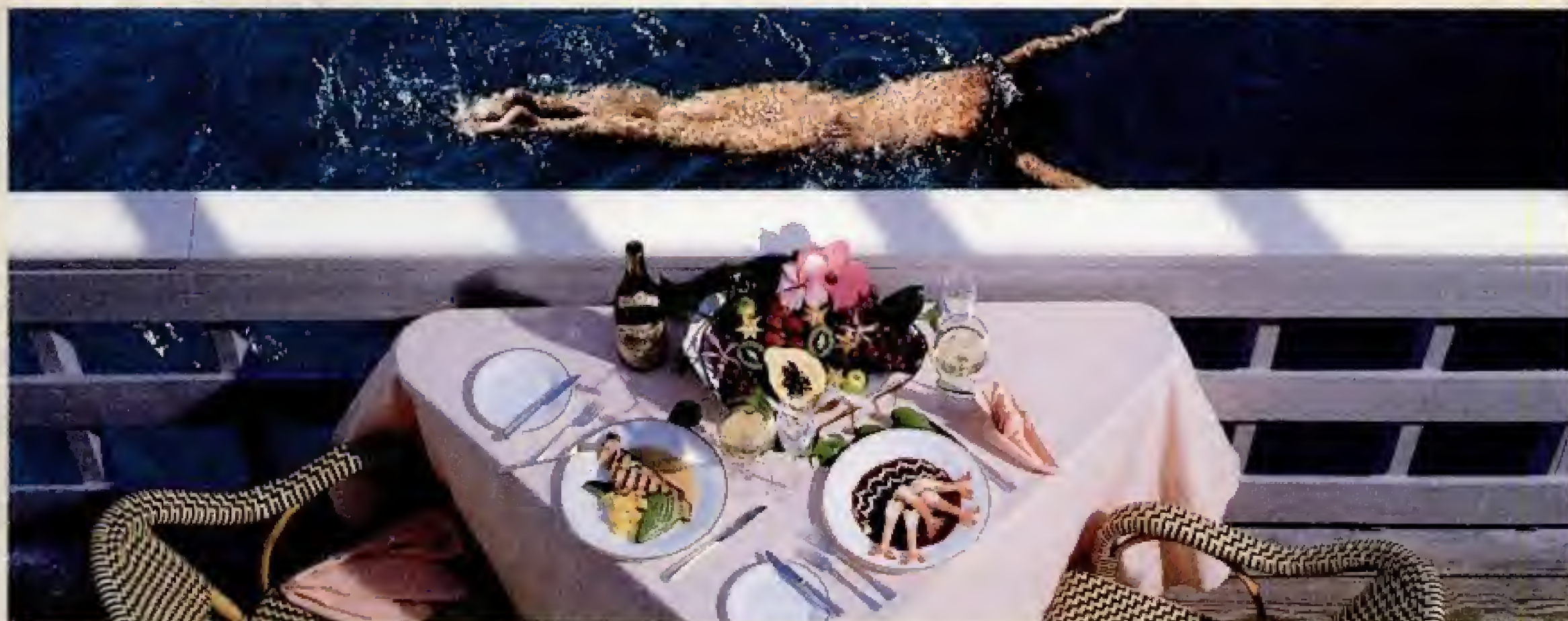
Does SPY have a grand scheme designed to avoid this seemingly inevitable decay? If not, I'm afraid I'll be reading an epitaph about SPY's creators 20 years from now.

Bill Valdez
Takoma Park, Maryland

In a sense, it was all over for us on October 1, 1986 — the day the first SPY appeared. We know we've been marking time since then (has it really been 48 issues?), but we still hope you'll stay with us for a while. We have some great stories planned: a four-part, 30,000-word look at the technology behind call-waiting; several Drew Barrymore profiles; and more.

DEAR EDITORS **I**'m a longtime admirer, and two things continue to mystify me. The first is how to follow the instructions of the create-your-own-George-Bush-speech-by-folding-the-pages-this-way-and-that piece ["Our Master's Voice," by Jeff Wise, January 1990]. The second is why anyone, peering back through the crosshairs, would sit still for a chat with a SPY triggerman. The hubris that must soak the souls of these dinner-party throwers, these shrill magazine publishers! ("No, no, I'm

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PLUS: Got a niggling gripe about the way we run things? We offer you the chance to grouse and complain by checking in with the Commissioner's Corner, where callers can comment on league action and hear responses from league officials.

To receive a copy of the September 1990 issue's original Rotisserie League Life article, send us a check or money order for \$1 (no cash or credit cards accepted). Also, old-timers already playing the magazine version, now months into their season, can get weekly scoring results for that contest by mail, at no cost. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to SPY's Rotisserie Update, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003.

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They're lining up to play *Rotisserie League Life 1991 — The Phone Version*. Twenty-four hours a day, a nation of know-it-alls are scrutinizing the news, tracking the performance of Dead Celebrities and Crumbling Institutions, and pressing eleven digits on their push-button phones in order to beef up their teams with hot headline grabbers. Just a little more than a month old, *Rotisserie League Life 1991 — The Phone Version* has already shown signs of surpassing Pictionary as the leisure-time obsession of the smart set. People from all walks of life are accepting the challenge—to do a better job of assembling a roster of news-making people, objects and concepts than anyone else in America.

Here's what some players have had to say about why they like playing *Rotisserie League Life*:

"I was in a dead-end job, washed up on the shores of loserdom. Then I started playing *Rotisserie League Life*. A week later, I met the girl of my dreams. Thanks, SPY!"

—D. Bourgeois, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

"Better than *Cats*! I'm going to play SPY's *Rotisserie League Life* again and again and again!"

—W. Monheit, New York City

If you haven't joined the game yet, don't worry: it's still early in the season, *and prizes are awarded every week*. There's plenty more action to come, plenty more cash to be won and plenty more smug self-satisfaction for everyone!

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102 Carl Icahn	307 Dick Tracy	510 Warsaw Pact	707 win on <i>America's Funniest Home Videos</i>
103 Charles H. Keating, Jr.	308 Uncle Buck	511 playoff-bound quarterbacks*	708 win the lottery
104 Henry Kravis	309 Nancy Weston	512 air travel*	709 write a screenplay
105 Mike Milken	310 the world against Saddam*	PANACEA	DEAD CELEBRITY
106 Rupert Murdoch	SCARY ORGANIZATION	601 Barbara Bush	801 James Dean
107 Ron Perelman	401 Hezbollah	602 condoms	802 Buddy Holly
108 Laurence Tisch	402 IRA	603 increased productivity	803 JFK
109 Donald Trump	403 IRS	604 Just Say No	804 John Lennon
110 Mort Zuckerman	404 Ku Klux Klan	605 limiting terms in office	805 Marilyn Monroe
SCANDAL-TAINTED POLITICIAN	405 Mafia	606 liquid dieters	806 Jim Morrison
201 Alan Cranston	406 Medellín cartel	607 Prozac	807 Elvis Presley
202 Al D'Amato	407 <i>The New York Times</i>	608 recycling	808 Andy Warhol
203 Dennis Deconcini	408 NRA	609 rough schools	809 Malcolm X
204 David Duke	409 PMRC	GET-RICH-QUICK SCHEME	SEXPOT
205 Barney Frank	CRUMBLING INSTITUTION	701 casino gambling	901 Tom Cruise
206 Newt Gingrich	501 CIA	702 get bought out by the Japanese	902 Sherilyn Fenn
207 Gary Hart	502 congressional ethics	703 own the film rights to a tragic tale	903 Andy Garcia
208 Ted Kennedy	503 Bill Cosby	704 "900" phone lines	904 Mel Gibson
209 Don Riegle	504 health care		905 John F. Kennedy Jr.
FICTITIOUS ANNOYANCE	505 NATO		906 Madonna
301 Agent Dale Cooper	506 network news		907 Michelle Pfeiffer
302 Freddy Krueger	507 New York City		908 Julia Roberts
303 Micky Mouse			909 Claudia Schiffer
304 Dan Quayle's respectability			

SPY's Rotisserie League Life Game Guidelines: 1. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. 2. Description of contest: SPY's Rotisserie League Life is an interactive telephone game in which the caller can use his knowledge of current events. 3. Term of game: Game begins January 1, 1991, and continues through June 30, 1991. A caller may sign up at any time during the term; one entrant per Social Security number. 4. Telephone requirements: Callers with a touch-tone telephone can play the game from anywhere in the continental United States by dialing 1-900-884-4-SPY at any time, 24 hours a day, during the term. Callers from rotary telephones are unable to play. 5. Restrictions: Anyone with a Social Security number can play the game; anyone under the age of 18 must get parental permission before calling. All prizes won by anyone under 18 will be awarded to his or her parent or legal guardian. 6. Rules availability: This game is subject to the complete Official Rules. A copy of the Official Rules, the ultimate method of entry and a complete list of winners can be obtained, free of charge, in person from SPY, 919 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022, during normal business hours, or write to SPY's Rotisserie League Life, c/o PPI, P.O. Box 7012, FDR Station, New York, NY 10022. AT&T is not a sponsor of the game.

then from October ("...in a very limited way. At that time, young Africans were very optimistic....But he is also very interested in..."). Then Harris writes, "Will someone please tell Sousa Jamba that very is not a very effective word? And that 'The people in the area are very friendly' is Cliché No. 89654 in the *Travel Writer's Handy Handbook*?" Mr. Harris Jr. can relax. *Wigwag*, as we went gratefully to press, had suspended publication.

Until recently, SPY had only one direct competitor—*MacUser* (see this space, October 1990 and January-February 1991). Now *Macworld* has decided to give *MacUser* a run for its money. A recent issue contained seven pairs of look-alikes (computer wonks who look like celebrities—listen, it's *Macworld*) under the heading "Separated at Birth?" Maybe we can help you fellows along. Have you considered a feature called "Ten Years Ago in *MacUser*"? Or—this is for you, *Macworld*—"The Fine 1270 d.p.i. display PostScript Print"?

Ann Sidles of Oswego, Illinois, has a gripe. "Why is the magazine bound in such a fashion that it is difficult to read when the magazine is folded over and the reader is lying down on her side?" she asks. "This is my favorite position for reading. Has anyone else noticed this problem?"

Lowell D. Ing of Seattle has presumably overcome the folding problem, or he surely would have mentioned it when he wrote to complain about the length of the mailing label. "Just what is the purpose of the extra two inches in length?" he asks. Isn't that kind of a selfish question from someone whose entire last name is only part of a present participle?

"How 'bout a special Midwest edition of SPY?" demands Lisa Romas. "We have plenty of material right here in St. Louis." Yeah? Well, Lisa, the Des Moines, Iowa, postmark on your envelope doesn't exactly inspire confidence.

Did we say, at the outset, that the recent mail was heaviest in three categories? We meant four. The volume of mail regarding non-SPY columnists and columns has been extraordinary. A roundup:

(1) Steve D. McLin of Davis, California, was amazed at the coincidence ▶

sure of it. I'll be the first one to come out looking *really good*!") Clay Felker may be a loser and a weirdo, but at least he tried to keep it a secret.

Tom Dunlop
New York

DEAR EDITORS **A** few years ago I wrote an article for *Manhattan, inc.* Soon after, I got a call from Clay Felker's secretary, summoning me to his office to discuss my next assignment. I was filled with anticipation (would I be inspired by the famous man? Would he share keen observations about writing?). What I had not anticipated, however, was the real Clay Felker, who returned from lunch late, apathetic and incoherent. He explained that he wanted me to write an upbeat profile of a "good friend" of his. Later it turned out the proposed subject was not interested. Felker didn't take this rejection sitting down; his response was to ban *me* from the pages of his magazine—and he made his executive editor, Ken Emerson, who'd praised my previous story, deliver the news. Emerson too was baffled by the whole thing; he was, he insisted, just carrying out "Clay's orders." A complicated guy, that Felker.

Warren Berger
Brooklyn, New York

DEAR EDITORS **R**e November's Industry column [by Celia Brady]: As a studio marketing executive, I should tell you that what you refer to as the Tracking Study (interviewing moviegoers after they have seen the film to gauge word of mouth) is actually what we refer to as an "exit poll" or "on-line interview." The Tracking Study can be used to assess a film's potential "legs" (ability to generate big money after opening). However, its primary function is to gauge the film's grossing potential *before* it opens by examining moviegoer awareness and interest.

Tracking is not used to "dictate the content and target audience of the film's television advertising"; that is determined by research conducted prior to putting the film on the Tracking Study. Tracking simply measures whether we've reached our target.

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opening weekend, the celebration knows no bounds. But if we're going into the toilet, we know it early. Ergo, your supposed conversation between supposed movie hipsters would most likely occur prior to opening, not after. Let's face it — if they're talking about Tracking after opening weekend, it's old news.

Name withheld

Los Angeles, California

Celia Brady replies. "Let's agree to split the definitives. I say 'tracking surveys,' you say 'exit polls.' The truth of the matter is, even changing the key art in Rocky V three weeks after the opening from the beefcake shot of Stallone to the warm and loving shot of Rocky hugging his son didn't help. Besides, how can you 'track' something before it comes out?"

DEAR EDITORS

In November's *Times* column J. J. Hunsecker mentioned that Max Frankel awarded Alessandra Stanley \$250 for referring to Jesse Jackson as the "Zelig of modern politics." In a column in the June 24, 1990, *Washington Post* entitled "Jesse, Jesse Everywhere," Tony Kornheiser compares Jesse Jackson to the ubiquitous Zelig. I was sort of wondering when Ms. Stanley first made this observation.

Karyl Krug

Austin, Texas

Stanley's Times story appeared on June 22. We warned you about Tony "Style-Section Embarrassment" Kornheiser in our Washington-issue Post column last May.

DEAR EDITORS

Paul Rudnick's "Presumed Innocence" [October] was yet another dead-on-the-money SPY article. Accordingly, I bring to your attention the recent mega-best-seller *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, by Robert Fulghum, which includes such profound advice as "Share everything" and "Flush." Perhaps we can add to the list of conspiracy theories the plot to infantilize America?

Scott Wood-Prince

Chicago, Illinois

DEAR EDITORS

You omitted the current Naïf trophy holder in the Congeniality and Longevity categories: Ronald Reagan, who, when in office, wore plaid slacks, fed acorns to

squirrels outside his Oval Office window and called his wife Mommy. He left grown-up chores like learning the names of Cabinet members, budget balancing, reading the Tower Commission's findings and answering reporters' questions to Gramm-Rudman, Don Regan, Ed Meese, Peggy Noonan, Joan Quigley, Mommy and the guy who revved up the helicopter.

Carl Dellanno

San Francisco, California

DEAR EDITORS

First you complained about Trump, then "irony," then a glory-hogging AIDS researcher, then the Naïf/Waif thing. You keep identifying the symptoms while the disease goes untreated. It is self-absorption, as characterized by the phrase "That's just the me in me coming out."

K. Alan Shoens

San Jose, California

DEAR EDITORS

Letter writer Barbara Middlebrook [October] seems to misunderstand the function of the satirist. To her, satire is just fine until it treads on one of her sacred cows ["Who Says Corporate America Plays It Safe?," by Eddie Stern, July]. Then it "crosses the line" into "neocon commentary" with "potential for damage." To me it is Middlebrook's assertions that truly are potentially damaging, for she would limit your targets to those that are Politically Correct to attack. True satire cannot play such favorites; it must target buffoonery that is both liberal and conservative, both open and repressed.

Of course, I'm not really looking forward to the first time you do one of your scorched-earth personality profiles on someone I actually respect. I only hope I'm strong enough to take it, and strong enough to avoid writing a pissy little missive like Middlebrook's.

Steve Omlid

San Francisco, California

Ms. Middlebrook? Mr. Omlid? Shall we reconvene in the "gray section"?

SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to SPY, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Typewritten letters are preferred. Please include your daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length or clarity. ☺

of *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen's finding himself "reflecting that baseball and opera have a lot in common. Both are slow-moving, with moments of almost intolerable excitement, and neither is over till the fat lady sings" just a couple of weeks after we had pointed out that "both [baseball and opera] move at a glacial pace...and neither is over until the fat lady sings" ("Take Me Out to La Scala," by Leslie Brenner, October). We share McLin's amazement at the coincidence.

(2) Columnist Roy MacGregor, in the *Ottawa Citizen*, lamented the three-month-long SPY lead time that kept Canada way down at No. 61 in the 1990 SPY 100 (thanks to Gerald Morris of Ottawa for the clipping). MacGregor claims that certain silly late-breaking Canadian events would have catapulted Canada into a tie for ninth place with the Hubble Space Telescope.

(3) Nolan W. Evans of Guelph, Ontario—*Guelph?*—writes, "In one of the student newspapers at the University of Guelph, the editor in chief has"—*Guelph?*—"decided to call her weekly column The Usual Suspects. However, she doesn't seem to have grasped the purpose of the SPY column from which the title was taken, since most of these columns are about the author herself."

(4) In the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, columnist Clark DeLeon describes the recent frantic intercorporate faxing of a funny annual report for organized crime. DeLeon calls the report anonymous, but we think it's safe to assume it's really that little promotional thing the Simpson Paper Company of San Francisco put out in 1981.

(5) And finally, a Gannett News Service column called Magazine Rack says a new San Francisco magazine, *The Nose*, is "very much like SPY, but without the swelled head." Attached to that clipping is a message from Denise Damiano of Merritt Island, Florida: "Gonna take that sitting down?" Absolutely. With our swelled head, sitting up would just give us the vapors. ☺

C O R R E C T I O N
The photo of Jordan's Queen Noor (as Lisa Halaby) with her Princeton housemates in the January-February issue was taken by Marolyn Stone. ☺

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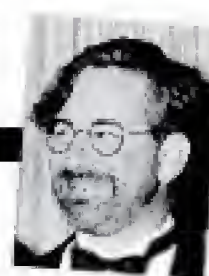
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THE FINE PRINT

by Jamie Malanowski

WHAT I DID FOR SCIENCE

Recently we found ourselves waiting for a friend in a medical library. Naturally enough, we passed the time roaming the stacks, perusing academic works in the field of sex research. We found it to be something of an eye-opener to discover what some sex researchers have faced over the years while pushing back the frontiers of science.

For example, Laud Humphreys, in the course of researching *Tearoom Trade*, his 1975 book on homosexual behavior, spent a considerable amount of time loitering in public rest rooms recording acts of oral copulation. Humphreys's method was to move from one public facility to another, where, posing as a voyeur, he would watch the participants. "In some [accommodations]," he writes, "one might wait for months before observing a deviant act (unless solitary masturbation is considered deviant). In others, the volume approaches orgiastic dimensions. One summer afternoon, for instance, I witnessed twenty acts of fellatio while waiting out a thunderstorm." Humphreys's book includes findings about the appropriate roles and behaviors of the fellator and the fellatee ("Avoid the ex-

IN THE 1971 FILM *Carnal Knowledge*, **ART GARFUNKEL**'s character grows balder and more disaffected as he reaches middle age, and seeks spiritual refuge in a much younger, honey-haired waif played by **CAROL KANE**. Now, at age 48, Garfunkel is living his role: his film and music careers have diminished to the point where he is publishing bad poetry and engaging in a cross-country trek he calls "The Walk" to gain publicity, and he is married to a young, blond singer named **KATHRYN CERMAK**. Last winter, evidently more desperate than ever to stir public interest in himself, Garfunkel paid a visit to his buddy **JANN WENNER** at *Rolling Stone*, a favorite strategy of stars whose careers are in decline. And Wenner, best friend to anyone who's anyone, was apparently happy to oblige him. Did Garfunkel suggest an article on his own future verse attempts? No, the Garfunkel-related item published in *Rolling Stone*'s Random Notes section was just this: a photograph of the balding singer's wife, eight months pregnant and nude.

II

IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME before mogulish kiddie-film maker **STEVEN SPIELBERG** began to preach the ways of lavish movie budgets to his more penurious peers. Recently he asked a highly respected fellow director how much his latest film, a unanimously praised box office success, had cost to make. When the director quoted a figure of \$25 million, Spielberg grinned and—presumably—joked, "*Twenty-five million dollars?* Why are you still making low-budget pictures?"

III

BECAUSE I AM BITTER, and Because Charles Johnson Won the Ten Grand That Everyone Knows I Deserve More Than He Does: Not long ago **JOYCE CAROL OATES** took time out from her busy writing schedule—about three hours, or an estimated 30,000 words' worth—to attend the National Book Foundation's 1990 National Book Awards cere-

mony. Like all the finalists, Oates, whose novel *Because It Is Bitter, and Because It Is My Heart* was nominated in the fiction category, received a handsomely framed, one-of-a-kind prize certificate inscribed with reverent, gushy comments. But alas, the fiction award—and the \$10,000 that accompanies it—went to **CHARLES JOHNSON**, for his novel *Middle Passage*. Oates, seemingly unconsoled by her consolation prize, left the ceremony without her finalist certificate, which languished on the floor beneath her chair, its protective glass cover shattered.

IIII

NINE YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL CYNICISM have apparently become something more than a comic mask for **DAVID LETTERMAN**. During commercial breaks on *Late Night*, his funny, once-revolutionary television program, Letterman does not, as one might suspect, engage in amusing repartee with his guests and audience or prepare for the next segment. Instead, he sits, head downward, pencil in hand, scribbling, like a disturbed child, "I hate myself" and "I hate my job" on a notepad on his desk.

IIII

THE REQUISITE UNPLEASANTNESSES of summer—fetid air, Lyme ticks, appearing publicly in a bathing suit—are only a few months away, and with them the requisite annual **SPIKE LEE** controversy. This year's will most likely derive from the curiously gratuitous preface Lee has affixed to his film *Jungle Fever*, which Universal, the Japanese company, plans to release in June. The film opens with a swooping crane shot of Lee, himself seated in the cherry picker of a camera crane, and then holds tight on the director's face. *You know*, he says, addressing the camera directly, *a lot of people have been calling me anti-Semitic*. Lee then raises his hand in what appears to be a peace sign. *And they can kiss my black ass*, he continues, thrusting the two fingers forward, *two times!*

WERNHER VON BRAUN, WE HARDLY KNEW YE

A Lexicological Update for the Nineties



DATED EXPRESSION: "He's/I'm no rocket scientist, but..." (Alternate: "It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that...").

ORIGINAL MEANING: "He's stupid"

FACTORS PROMPTING REASSESSMENT (as reported in *The New York Times* in recent months):

"Troubles Raising Questions About Space Agency" (July 1)

"A New Mirror Problem for NASA May Stall Vital Weather Satellites" (Aug. 8)

"Backup Computer Is Balky on Craft Exploring Venus" (Aug. 14)

"Mapping of Venus Is Delayed for Study of Radio Problems" (Aug. 25)

"Space Shuttle Faces up to Week's Delay Over Electrical Snag" (Sept. 1)

"Shuttle Astronomy Mission Is Postponed by Fuel Leak" (Sept. 6)

"Rocket Motor Fire Kills and Hurts 9" (Sept. 8)

"Mathematical Error Is Seen Behind Flaw in Hubble Telescope" (Sept. 13)

"Shuttle Launching Canceled Again" (Sept. 18)

"Those Hisses on the Launching Pad" (Sept. 29)

"Loose Beam Found in Space Shuttle" (Oct. 5)

"NASA Weighs Mission to Correct Space Telescope's Blurred Vision" (Oct. 27)

"Shuttle, Sidelined Since May, May Be Launched on Sunday" (Nov. 28)

"Panel on Space Telescope Cites Flaws in Management" (Nov. 28)

"Device on Shuttle Fails" (Dec. 4)

"Astronauts Struggle to Operate Balky Observatory" (Dec. 5)

"More Targets Missed in Troubled Shuttle Mission" (Dec. 6)

"Computer Fails, Posing Threat to Shuttle's Astronomy Mission" (Dec. 7)

"Waste-Unit Flaw May Cut Shuttle Flight" (Dec. 9)

"Shuttle's Stargazing Disappoints Astronomers" (Dec. 11)

"Shuttle Lands in Good Shape, but Puzzle of Lint Remains" (Dec. 12)

—David Shenk

PRIVATE LIVES OF PUBLIC FIGURES



Director John Hughes holds a preproduction meeting for his next blockbuster.

ILLUSTRATION BY DREW FRIEDMAN

THE SPY LIST

Miles Davis

Cary Grant

Kenneth Halliwell

Jake La Motta

David Soul

Joel Steinberg

Johnny Stompanato

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

change of biographical data") and is buttressed by meticulous notes: "A moved into stall with X (X is a noisy sucker, much 'slurping'...). A left first stall and stepped...between Y and O. He stood there, masturbating both himself and Y, who ha[d] stood up. Meanwhile, C...went into stall with X, who proceeded to fellate him. Y then stood on the toilet seat, watching X and C, while A sucked Y (A had to crouch but continued to masturbate). It was getting crowded on that side of the room...."

Not all sex research, it seems, can be conducted in such a low-tech way. Consider the efforts of David Wheeler and H. B. Rubin, two scientists who in 1987 entered into the debate about which is the more effective way to measure penile erection—the circumferential, the method most frequently used, or the volumetric, which is reputedly more exact. The circumferential measurement is taken by forming a strain gauge transducer—a device constructed by filling a piece of Silastic rubber tubing with mercury and sealing both ends with platinum electrodes, cement and shrinkable tubing—into a loop that is placed around the penis. The loop then functions as one leg of a bridge circuit powered with one volt of electricity. As the penis becomes erect, the mechanism allows a signal to be registered that shows how big is big.

The volumetric device, by contrast, consists of a Plexiglas cylinder with one open end. "The closed end [is] sealed," the writers tell us in an article that appeared in the *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, "except for a short nipple that serve[s] as a connector for the 1/4-inch Tygon tubing that connect[s] the cylinder to a pressure transducer (Narco Biosystems Model RP1500). The open



FIRST, A GULF WAR; NEXT, A COMEBACK FOR COUNTRY JOE AND THE FISH

Timely Advice for Young Americans

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

end [is] covered by a diaphragm constructed from... elastic material cut from the finger portion of a surgical glove...to form an elastic tube. One end of the tube [is] stretched over the open end of the cylinder and the other provide[s] a hole in the center of the resulting diaphragm. When a penis [is] placed in the hole, the diaphragm act[s] as an airtight seal so that any change in the size of the penis result[s] in a change in pressure in the cylinder." And you thought American ingenuity was dead!

Which device measures better? To find out, the researchers recruited six volunteers, who, in the interests of science, agreed to watch a porno video while wearing the two devices. (Arranging this was not as easy as it sounds. A previous experiment seeking to compare the devices proved inconclusive when 34 men had trouble keeping both devices on their penises.) This time, Wheeler and Rubin instructed the subjects to place the strain gauge transducer at the base of the penis. The subjects then watched the movie for about three minutes, long enough to become semierect. At that point they were instructed to put on a condom, lubricate it with a water-soluble gel and then insert the penis into the cylinder of the volumetric device. Each subject then had to secure the cylinder to his waist with a gauze bandage and attach the Tygon tubing to the nipple of the cylinder. "Subjects," Wheeler and Rubin write, "were then instructed to relax."

But not too much. Having gone through the trouble of finding six men who would, without financial compensation, be willing to sit in a room with two mechanical devices on their penises and watch an X-rated movie, the researchers wanted to make sure the fellows would

Nearly 20 years have passed since a U.S. president last sent his chilly greetings to young men he wished to conscript into the armed forces. Given the situation in the Gulf, we decided to consult the official regs for alternatives available to those draft-age Americans who would rather not develop a love-hate relationship with a tough but fair drill sergeant or die defending the cause of cheap oil.

1. *Seek Conscientious-Objector Status*

Pros: Least physically taxing option; requires no dummied medical records or memorization of complicated symptoms

Cons: Could possibly prevent you from becoming contestant on *American Gladiators*

Tip: The government doesn't require you to believe in an anthropomorphized Supreme Being to get this status; just act sincere.

2. *Study for the Ministry*

Pros: Training could prove valuable should you wish to publish best-selling self-help book about the enduring lessons of tot-hood

Cons: (For Catholics) vow of celibacy is a big step; (for Jews) you'll have to spend most of your Saturdays congratulating pimply-faced adolescents on their ascent to manhood

Tip: Because all Jehovah's Witnesses are called ministers, you might think that selling *The Watchtower* once or twice will get you over; the government, however, knows the trick.

3. *Commit a "Serious Suicidal Gesture"*

Pros: Can do double duty as guilt-provoking attention getter if performed within context of romantic relationship

Cons: Significantly unpleasant consequences of miscalculation

Tip: You have to do more than read lots of Sylvia Plath and John Berryman.

4. *Exhibit Homosexual Behavior Beyond "the Occurrence of a Single Episode...While Intoxicated"*

Pros: You'll appreciate *Pee-wee's Playhouse* on a whole other level

Cons: You'll have to endure having Harvey Fierstein as one of your spokespersons

Tip: The Village People were a singing group from the seventies whose hits included "Macho Man" and "In the Navy."

5. *Remove Enough Teeth to Prevent "Adequate Mastication and Incision of a Normal Diet"*

Pros: Inability to consume solids jibes nicely with herbal-tea-and-yogurt, pacifist way of life;

fewer cavities; provides head start on a boxing career; you'll be able to floss with rope

Cons: You're likely to tire of hearing people say, "Hey, aren't you that guy from the Pogues?"; could backfire if you misjudge number of teeth needed for adequate mastication and incision, resulting in vexing tour of duty in which you have only parched lips to serve as barrier between your inner mouth and sirocco-borne clouds of fine-grained sand

Tip: Get a good blender.

6. *Amputate Enough of the Penis So That "the Resulting Stump Is Insufficient to Permit Normal Micturition"*

Pros: Reduces risk of catching sexually transmitted disease; you'll have cleaner line in trousers

Cons: Abnormal micturition

Tip: Many people have found that serving in the armed forces was a rewarding experience.

—Josh Gillette

SEPARATED AT BIRTH?



Barbara Bush...



and Vincent Gardenia?



Joe Montana...



and Barry Manilow?



Jonathan Winters...



and Babe Ruth?

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SOMETHING
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THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

actually watch the movie. To hold the subjects' attention, the researchers rigged the TV monitor so that a light flashed every 15 seconds or so. The subjects were instructed to press a button on their chair whenever the light flashed. In the end, Wheeler and Rubin, with the help of those six stalwart volunteers, were able to prove that the devices worked equally well but that the circumferential device was easier to use. (What's the point? Well, the next time you hear Southside Johnny advance the thesis that "it ain't the meat, it's the motion," you'll know that science is working toward a time when that proposition can be tested clinically.)

Some studies achieved more practical results. In 1974 two researchers from Canada, Donald Dutton and Arthur Aron, studied the effects of anxiety on sexual attraction. In one experiment, they paired male subjects with an attractive woman who was part of the research team but was posing as a fellow subject. The researcher in charge then told the men that each would soon get hit with an electrical shock; some were told they'd receive a strong shock, others just a tingle. First, however, they had to answer some written questions, including two about the female subject who was their partner: *How much would you like to ask her out for a date?* and *How much would you like to kiss her?* Dutton and Aron found that a subject who'd been told he would soon get hit with a strong shock was more apt to be attracted to the woman than was a subject who'd been told to expect a tingle.

And some of the studies were more sociological. One researcher found that beer parties, or "keggars," were popular with college students because they promised an opportunity to meet a member ▶

SADDAM HUSSEIN: HITLERIAN BRUTE OR AMERICA'S SAVIOR?

(Or Ted Turner's New Best Friend?)

Saddam to the rescue...of our beleaguered arms manufacturers?

"The barons of America's military establishment owe a moment of heartfelt silence in thanks to Iraq's Saddam Hussein."

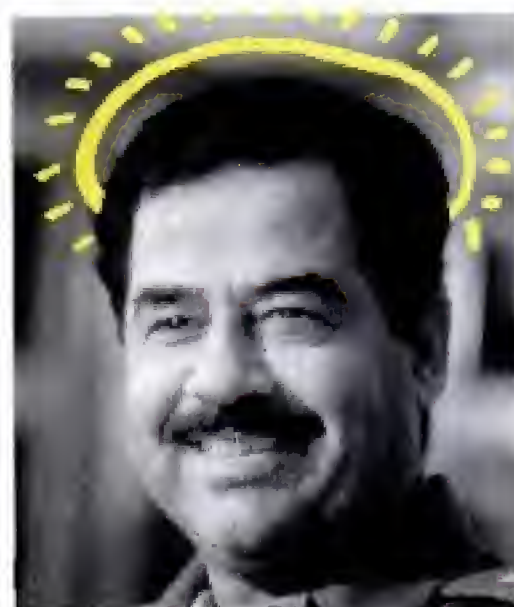
—*Chicago Tribune*

"Along comes a 'rescuer' named Saddam Hussein. Thanks to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the US defense industry is back in the saddle."

—*The Christian Science Monitor*

"You can thank Saddam Hussein for \$2 to \$3 billion in weapons' spending, [military writer Thomas McNaugher] said."

—*Newsday*



...of our beleaguered incumbents?

"The specter of Iraq's Saddam Hussein may help incumbents showing up on TV visiting troops."

—*USA Today*

"Candidates seeking re-election this year were supposed to face voters angry about the savings and loan scandal and uneasy about the economy. Then the Persian Gulf crisis 'knocked everything else off the radar screen,' says Republican strategist Ed Rollins."

—*USA Today*

...of East-West relations?

"In time...we may even thank the unscrupulous Saddam Hussein for helping steer the world toward a new era in global equilibrium."

—Timothy Cooper, in a letter to *The Washington Post*

"Officials say the Gulf crisis...could even help to further cement the East-West accord Gorbachev has labored to achieve."

—Reuters

"Thanks to Saddam Hussein, Turkey is once more a courted and valued Washington ally."

—*Los Angeles Times*

...of our farmers and oilmen?

"The seizure of Kuwait by Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein is certain to help the Texas oil economy."

—*The Washington Times*

"Thanks to Saddam Hussein, Americans are once again bemoaning their dependence on foreign crude, welcome news for the makers of ethanol."

—*Fortune*

"This year all kinds of things went down: real estate, media, banks, public stocks, private companies, you name it (among major categories, agriculture and oil were strong—thank you, Saddam Hussein)."

—*Forbes*

"The long-battered oil service industry is breathing a sigh of relief—thanks to Saddam Hussein."

—Reuters Business Report

...of hawks and spooks?

"The American 'hawks' should also be grateful to him."

—commentary by Aleksandr Bovin, *Izvestia*

"[Michael Hershman, president of the Fairfax Group, an intelligence and security group] said [that] now, thanks to Saddam Hussein, he is projecting a 50 to 60 percent rise in this year's revenues....CEO Gerard Burke said events in the Persian Gulf will help push Parvus' [another spy and security firm] revenues near the \$2-million mark this year. [And] he expects to be busy handling consequent terrorist crises for a few years to come."

—*Washington Business Journal*

...of our stove manufacturers?

"Even Saddam Hussein can't help but bring a little warmth to Some American hearts and hearths....Thanks to Hussein, the makers of wood and coal stoves are feeling a boomlet in a business that has seen far more downs than ups in the past decade or so."

—UPI

...of the quality of our lives?

"War has become human again, and the world has Saddam Hussein...to thank for it."

—*The Washington Times*

"I think we should thank Hussein. He's making us a better country."

—local biker Half Horse, quoted in *Seattle Times*

—David Shenk



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HOLLYWOOD ON THE GULF

Twelve Tough Eggs Who Can Finish the Job of Desert Storm

At press time the U.S. military operation in the Middle East was well under way, and a victory for democracy, access to oil, Kuwaiti self-government-by-a-native-born-despot, and exclusive rights to nuclear capability by relatively sane people seemed likely. But how to minimize our casualties and make quick work of the moping up? We remember the apparent logic of Sgt. Fury and his Howling Commandos: *Where a whole army might fail, our crack commando squad, one small unit of elite, highly trained and motivated fighting men, might succeed.*

As President Kennedy took inspiration from Henry V, as President Reagan took inspiration from old 1940s films, so might we take our cue from a dramatic classic — *The Dirty Dozen*. We propose finding 12 hardened criminals and — in exchange for pardons for those actually in jail and a clean record for everyone else — turning them loose on Baghdad.

Who could command such a team? A tough, loyal patriot with a mean streak and nothing to lose. We nominate — *Pat Buchanan*. He's never let down a GOP president

in trouble, and he's looking for a chance at redemption for having opposed Operation Desert Shield; furthermore, what could better anoint a potential presidential candidate who never served in the armed forces than a glorious rain of Iraqi bullets? No one will dare call him chicken hawk again. For second-in-command we nominate *Dan Quayle* — a young man labeled draft dodger, daddy's boy, white feather. If Dan acquits himself well on this mission, President Bush will have a much stronger running mate in 1992. And if he doesn't come back, well, President Bush will have a much stronger running mate in 1992.

Because our Dirty Dozen 1991 is being dispatched to Iraq and Kuwait, they'll need a guide. (No, not Sirhan Sirhan — that little worm would stab them in the back as soon as they crossed the first sand dune.) We propose *Salman Rushdie*. He knows the culture, he's loyal to the West, and since his recent atonement fell on deaf ears, he'd probably love the chance to mix it up with some Islamic fundamentalists.

— *Bill Flanagan*



OLIVER NORTH

Motives: to silence prosecutors once and for all and clear name

Combat Skills: decorated hero in Vietnam; experienced Middle East negotiator

JAMES BROWN

Motive: to earn a pardon for his misdemeanor conviction

Combat Skills: never gets tired; helmet made of hair

BERNHARD GOETZ

Motive: to erase his

PETE ROSE

Motive: to earn a pardon for his felony conviction

Combat Skills: great American athlete who will do anything to win and wears spiked shoes

MANUEL NORIEGA

Motive: to get his felony charges dropped

Combat Skills: scary-looking, and when hopped up will kill pretty much anybody

misdemeanor conviction

Combat Skills: can take out four armed opponents with one small pistol; melts into night like phantom

G. GORDON LIDDY

Motives: to erase his felony convictions and clear his name

Combat Skills: former intelligence operative; loyal, brave—avowed willingness to be murdered by his own side to protect Richard Nixon; not scared of lightning

MARION BARRY

Motive: to earn a pardon for his misdemeanor conviction

Combat Skills: willing to charge in, headfirst and screaming, against overwhelming odds

WILLIAM CALLEY

Motives: to erase his felony convictions, restore his pension and secure an honorable discharge

Combat Skills: not spooked by a little blood



LEONA HELMSLEY

Motives: to earn a pardon for her felony conviction; to avenge misuse of word *guest* by Saddam

Combat Skills: rough, ornery, mean old dame

JIM BAKKER

Motives: to earn a pardon for his felony convictions and introduce makeup to women of Saudi Arabia

Combat Skills: can convert suicide-ready Muslims into selfish Christians

JOHN HINCKLEY

Motive: to clear his name

Combat Skills: would shoot Saddam (or successor) to impress Winona Ryder

PATTY HEARST

Motive: to erase her felony conviction

Combat Skills: expert at use of firearms and automatic weapons; skilled at eluding capture; bank robber, Mata Hari-level actress

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

of the opposite sex. Two other researchers, examining psychosexual stories told by little boys, found that in the stories told by lads who were seven years old and younger there were references to "spitting, shitting, pants down, naked girls, pee fights, biting weeners, long weeners, sucking buggars, pinching asses and fucking." Among boys at least eight years old, references to "having a boner, farting, tits, being horny, a dickey, animalism, having babies, throwing up, massages, cunts, eating shit, leaping on girls, sexual assaults, being pregnant, whores, vaginas and incest" started to appear.

One article from a 1982 issue of *The Journal of Sex Research* contains no scientific research but instead addresses a linguistic matter. "In neither the standard English vocabulary of literature and science," writes John Money of Johns Hopkins University, "nor in the vernacular vocabulary of uncensored speech, are there terms by which to distinguish what the woman does to the man, in the procreative act, from what the man does to the woman. Terminologically, each is obliged to do the same thing to the other, whether it be poetically making love, politely copulating, metaphorically balling or screwing, colloquially fucking, or evasively getting some." But all of these terms, Money points out, presume that the male is the active partner and the female the passive partner, which is not necessarily the case. Money notes that the terminology of animal breeding does not suffer this problem, but "in the mating of human beings, it is not idiomatic to say that the woman presents, crouches or lordoses [*sic*]." Money suggests a solution in the form of two words popular several centuries ago: Use the word *quim*, a derivative of the Celtic word for cleft, to describe "tak[ing] the pe- ▶

THE TEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

Eavesdropping on the Answering Machines of the Rich and Famous

Armed with more than 200 celebrity home phone numbers culled from power Rolodexes all over Manhattan, we looked forward with privacy-invading glee to the task of recording and transcribing the outgoing phone messages of some professionally entertaining personalities. Mostly, though, we ended up bewildering a lot of Spanish-speaking maids or hanging up on answering services. Particularly frustrating were the times we had to rudely ring off on the

celebrities themselves, such as Katharine Hepburn, Karen Finley and Art Buchwald, all of whom turn out to be homebodies (Buchwald picked up his phone on five different occasions). When we *did* get through to an answering machine, we were all too often served up tired clichés by public figures who apparently check their charisma at the welcome mat. Congratulations, then, to the happy few below, who realize that Celebrity punches no time clock.

PETER FONDA: [*Crash sound effect*] "Jeez, you hit the ranch. We can't find the phone right now; we'll try to get back to you. Wait for the beep."

LAUREN BACALL: "It's ridiculous, but I'm not here, so if you leave your name, number and the hour of your call, I will get back to you when I am here, if I am here. Isn't that an amazing... situation?"

CONNIE CHUNG AND MAURY POVICH: [*Together—almost:*] "We're not here, so just leave your message." [*Long pause. Maury's voice:*] "Boy, we're not even in sync." [*Connie's voice:*] "I think that was okay!"

or (some weeks earlier):

[*Connie:*] "Hi, we've finally changed our message...." [*Maury:*] "And now that we have, you can leave yours!"

TONY RANDALL: "This is [*gives his number*]. Please leave your message after the musical tones."

CRISPIN GLOYER: "Rat catching! Studies in rat catching for the use of schools. Chapter One: 'In the following elementary treatise for the use of public schools, I propose following exactly the same plan as my parson (a good fellow, not afraid of a ferret or a rat) does with his

sermons—that is, divide it into different heads, and then jumble up all the heads with the body, till it becomes as difficult



to follow as a rat's hole in a soft bank; and, to begin with, I am going to talk.' Hello, this is Crispin. That was a selected reading from my book *Rat Catching*, which is a study of the art of rat catching plus something extra! *Rat Catching* is now available in a fine hardbound edition, which is a limited number of 1,000. It is signed and numbered, with over 60 photographs and illustrations for your assistance and perusal."

VICTORIA JACKSON: "Say, 'Call back.'" [*Baby's voice:*] "Call back!" "Say, 'We love you.'" [*Baby: Close approximation thereof.*] "Say, 'Bye-bye.'" [*Baby:*] "Bye-bye!"

ADOLPH GREEN AND PHYLLIS NEWMAN: [*Phyllis's voice:*] "We're not available at the moment. Won't you please leave a message as soon as you hear the beep, and we will get back to you as soon as possible. This is a machine,

and you are not, so thank you."

LAUREN HUTTON: "Hi. Um...I don't know. I'm outta here. Leave a message; I'll check in. Bye."

MICHAEL MUSTO: "Hello, I love you. Won't you tell me your name?"

SAMMY CAHN: "A Sammy Cahn can be reached during

the working week at [*says number twice*], but in this wintry weather, he'd love to come home to warm words, so leave some, please. [*Repeats number again.*] And be nice to yourself."

ROBIN BYRD: [*A man's voice:*] "Hi, this is Shelley. I'm out and will be back later. If you're calling for Robin, Robin's out and will be back later also." [*Musical accompaniment: Janet Jackson's "Nasty Boy."*]

JOEY HEATHERTON: "Hi, this is Joey. I'm not in. When you hear the beep, you know what to do—do it."

JERRY RUBIN: "Hi, it's Jerry Rubin—thank you for calling! I have a great business opportunity here—a nutritional alternative to coffee! Can you believe that? Please leave your name and phone number, and I'll get right back to you. Thank you very much." —Jed Spingarn



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THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

nis into the vagina and perform[ing] grasping, sliding, and rotating movements on it of varying rhythm, speed and intensity," and use *swive* to describe "put[ting] the penis into the vagina and perform[ing] sliding movements of varying depth, direction, rhythm, speed and intensity." *Quim*, Money notes, brings with it such circa-1700 derivatives as *quimming* and *quim-stick*. (What's a quim-stick? Something to which Wheeler and Rubin attach a strain gauge transducer.)

SOMETHING TO ANGER THE INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION, SOMETHING TO PLEASE THE FURRIERS

Last year Senator Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) endured a teeny controversy. It turned out that even though he was the sponsor of a bill to limit imports of textiles and clothing, he had on several occasions been the client of a custom tailor in South Korea. Not long after the story appeared, Sam Donaldson of ABC News raised the matter with Hollings on *This Week With David Brinkley*. Because the senator speaks as though his mouth were packed with hominy, much of the nation missed his reply:

Donaldson: Senator, you're from the great textile-producing state of South Carolina. Is it true you have a Korean tailor?

Hollings: Well, I'll tell you the truth. I think I got that suit — this is not the one —

Brinkley: Let's see the label in that one. What is the label in it?

Hollings: — the same place right down the street where — if you want to personalize this thing — where you got that wig, Sam.

Donaldson: Well, I just got to ask you —

Hollings: Well, I got to give it back to you if you want to personalize it. ☺

MARCH DATEBOOK *Enchanting and Alarming Events Upcoming*

1 Last day to study for the New York Police Officer exam.

Throughout the five boroughs, would-be cops congregate in coffee shops to compare practice essays on automobile-booting procedures, address one another as "youse" and chide those without mustaches.

2 Tom Wolfe and Mikhail Gorbachev celebrate their 60th birthdays, and the town of Weatherford, Oklahoma, hosts a hog-calling contest.

6 First mandatory day of spring training. The *New York Post's* back page laments our departed stars (JUST NOT THE SAME — RAGS,

DARRYL SUIT UP IN CALIFORNIA COLORS) and runs a smaller item concerning Pascual Perez's unexplained absence from the Yanks' Fort Lauderdale camp.

10 International Beauty Show; Javits Center.

"This one's the granddaddy of them all, 74 years old," organizer Norma Lee told us.

"For the first time ever, we're bringing over three hairdressers from

Russia." The Berlin Wall, the Channel Tunnel — all at once, the global village is becoming a joyous reality.

17 St. Patrick's Day. In a remarkable demonstration of America's cultural-assimilation process, thousands of people of non-Irish heritage

drink Bushmills, speak fondly of the Guilford Four and become woozy.

21 Iowa celebrates Bird Day. Curiously, Al Gore of Tennessee and Richard Gephardt of Missouri see fit to attend bird-related festivities in Iowa City and Oskaloosa, respectively. And at a roadside diner outside Des Moines, Mario Cuomo of New York



tells confused patrons, "Like any paizan', I kept homing pigeons as a child."

25 The Academy Awards. *Dances With Wolves* wins a slew of Oscars, but Kevin

Costner's Sioux costars refuse to attend the ceremony; instead they send Marlon Brando, who delivers an impassioned speech about the sad plight of Italian-Americans.

30 The Greater New York International Auto Show begins at the Javits Center, accompanied by the usual dose of human drama. Air bag-vs.-seat belt arguments proliferate. A small-time entrepreneur hawks sheepskin upholstery and replica parts for old Bugattis. And as the Charlie Daniels Band blares over the P.A. system, a tomboy in overalls happens upon a dismantled L'Oréal booth left over from the International Beauty Show and experiences her sexual awakening. ☺



Walter Monheit's BLURB-O-MAT

Capsule Movie Reviews by Walter "Dateline: The Copa" Monheit™, the Movie Publicist's Friend

[Editors' note: By resounding popular decree, Walter Monheit™ has been reinstated as SPY's movie critic-at-large. Of the 41 readers who cast Monheit Plugola Scandal referendum ballots, 36 voted in Monheit's favor, 4 sought his ouster, and 1 was disqualified for voting twice. (A 42nd, particularly bothersome reader sent in a blank ballot accompanied by a request for "more info.") Monheit is back! — chastened, he says, but ready to rumba.]

THE MARRYING MAN, starring Kim Basinger, Alec Baldwin (Buena Vista) ☺☺☺☺

Walter Monheit says, "Do you, Oscar, take Kim and Alec to be your laughfully wedded partners in sultry screendom, till death do you ooof!?"

THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, starring Jodie Foster, Anthony Hopkins, Scott Glenn (Orion) ☺☺☺☺

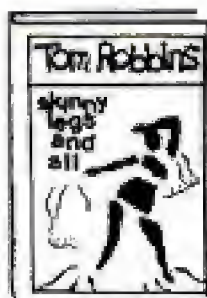
Walter Monheit says, "Baa baa baa vooom! Jodie's show-all-your-chops performance is a grade-A bet to fleece Meryl of an Oscar and lead Lambs to box office slaughter!"

SCENES FROM A MALL, starring Woody Allen, Bette Midler, directed by Paul Mazursky (Buena Vista) ☺☺☺☺

Walter Monheit says, "Attention, shoppers! Maz's Mall has heartbreak, hilarity and chutzpah — all under one roof!"

What the monocles mean: ☺☺☺ — excellent; ☺☺☺☺ — indisputably a classic

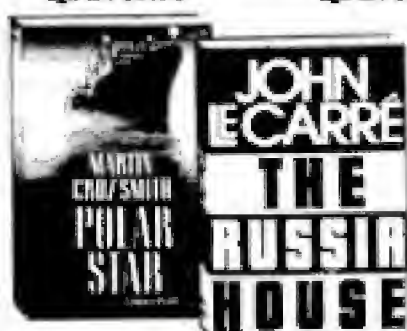
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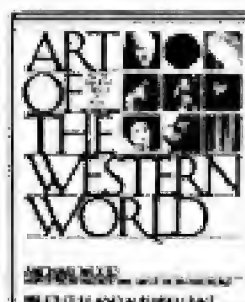
*539. "A phantasmagorical, politically charged tale you wish would never end" — Publishers Weekly.
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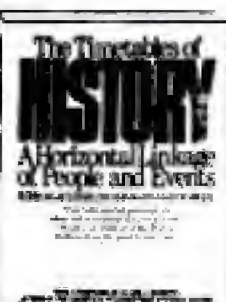
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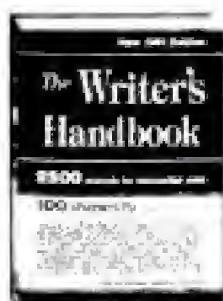
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QPB: \$15.95



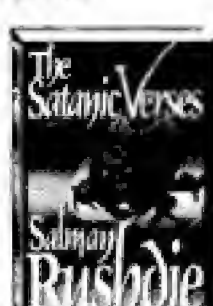
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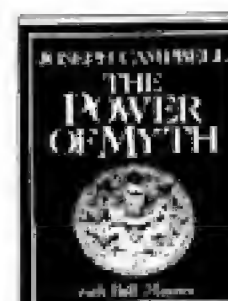
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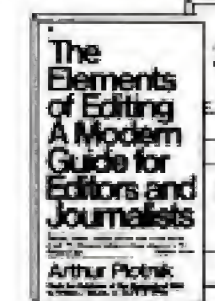
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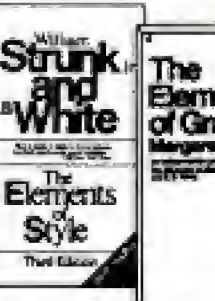
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TWIGGY, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME

The Great Poor-Kid-Makes-Good Stories of Our Time



In his 100-odd tales of small-town boys arriving nearly penniless in the brutal big city and earning fortunes by dint of hard work and virtuous living, Horatio Alger often went so far as to record the exact amount of change his impoverished characters started out with—12 cents, 50 cents, a dollar. One of *Alger's* favorite books was Benjamin Franklin's autobiography, in which

Franklin described running away from Boston and arriving in Philadelphia with one Dutch dollar to his name.

Precision Poverty as a literary device to highlight subsequent success is a tradition upheld to this day, as the following examples of journeys culled from actual celebrity memoirs and biographies demonstrate.

Name	Age	From	To	How Much?	How?	Comments
Yul Brynner	23	Paris	New York City	No money	Steamer	Says he found someone's gold filling on 42nd Street and sold it for \$5
Mark Twain	21	Cincinnati	New Orleans	"No money to speak of"	Steamer	Went to St. Louis to borrow \$100 to pay for river-pilot instruction
Will Rogers	23	Oklahoma	Africa	"Plum busted, sho nuff"	Steamer	Set out with \$3,000, but went via New Orleans, New York, London and Argentina
Lucille Ball	20s	Jamestown, New York	New York City	5¢	(Not stated)	Stole waiter's tip to buy coffee; also panhandled a penny
Twiggy (Leslie Hornsby)	15	Neasden, England	London	2 shillings (≈27¢)	Bus	Was broke, so had to borrow bus fare to see fashion editor who "discovered" her
Richard Pryor	23	Peoria	New York City	"About \$2"	Bus	After he cleaned himself up and had a smoke, had 33 cents left
Sidney Poitier	16	Atlanta	New York City	About \$3	Bus	Had more, but it was stolen during trip
Lawrence Welk	21	North Dakota	South Dakota	About \$3	Buggy	Also brought \$400 accordion
Lee Iacocca	21	Allentown, Pennsylvania	Detroit	\$50	Train, car	Also had a duffel bag
Aristotle Onassis	17	Turkey	Argentina	\$60	Steamer	Bribed man on ship to get a good bunk
Errol Flynn	17	Sydney	New Guinea	£18 (≈\$87)	Boat	Sold engagement ring girlfriend threw at him
Henry Fonda	22	Omaha	Cape Cod	\$100	Car	Last of his earnings from vaudeville stint playing Abe Lincoln's secretary
Gene Autry	19	Oklahoma	New York City	\$150 hidden in suitcase	Train	Had no job, only "a few names to call and a pure heart"
Al Neuharth	30	South Dakota	Miami, Florida	\$300	Car	U-Haul trailer held all his possessions, presaging bus trip 30 years later
Roseanne Barr	19	Salt Lake City	Colorado	\$400	Bus	Stopped in Grand Junction to throw up
Ronald Reagan	17	Dixon, Illinois	Eureka, Illinois	\$400	(Not stated)	Lifeguard savings; off to college
Carol Burnett	18–21	L.A.	New York City	\$528	Airplane	Had \$1,000, but needed dental work
Jimmy Carter	29	New York (Navy stint)	Plains, Georgia	A few grand	Car	Sold 2,000 tons of fertilizer in first year of new business
Richard Nixon	33	Baltimore	California	\$10,000	(Not stated)	Savings to run for Congress from salaries and poker winnings
Donald Trump	25	Queens	Upper East Side	\$200,000, but "most of it was tied up in buildings"	(Not stated)	Says his father's life story is "classic Horatio Alger"

—Charles R. Rowe



Frank



Paul

The Frank Rich–Alex Witchel–Paul Goldberger–Arthur Gelb controversy has taken on a tragicomic life of its own. Indeed, it could someday provide the basis for one of Rich's beloved West End productions, this one starring Simon Callow as the embittered theater critic and John Hurt as his former friend and current boss. Why, it could be written by David Hare!

As readers of SPY will recall (cue up orchestra here), Rich, the *Times*'s often wickedly funny theater critic, had canceled his longstanding friendship with Goldberger, the paper's new culture czar, after the *Times* ran producer David Merrick's ad poking fun at Rich's romance with Witchel, the paper's new theater reporter.

Rich and Goldberger have since effected a chilly détente, reestablishing communications for work-related purposes, but their conflict continues on other fronts. It now seems that the documentation of the insane culture-desk standoff in last month's space has touched off an outbreak of interoffice pettiness that recalls LBJ's White House at its most pernicious and Nixon's (*hello, Mr. Gelb!*) at its most leak-obsessed. Rich, for instance, has been fretting openly that some of his *Times* colleagues have been loose-lipped with details of the soap opera.

Witchel has once again laid into Goldberger, this time accusing him of leaking the details of her defiant, high-decibel declaration that she wouldn't report to him—when, in fact, their argument had taken place in a partially open office just a few feet from almost everyone else in the culture department.

For his part, Goldberger has just brooded. His generous treatment here last month has reportedly prompted him

to complain that it only undermined his cause, because SPY had taken his side.

Things have been considerably sunnier up on the eighth floor, where Warren "No" Hoge—formerly assistant managing editor in charge of telling *Times* writers they couldn't do freelance work—has gleefully assumed his new post as editor of the Sunday magazine. Hoge, you will remember, was the driving force behind *Blocks*, the hypothetically downtownish arts-and-leisure magazine the *Times* developed and then shelved last year without ever producing an issue. Ever the cagey office strategist, Hoge transmuted the aborted takeoff into a success: he announced to intimates that he'd been offered the choice of editing the *Times Magazine* or simply appointing an editor and still moving up to the eighth floor, a perch from which he could boss the appointee around. He proudly claims he chose to remain in the trenches, a working journalist.

Hoge's ascension to the magazine job couldn't have made executive editor Max Frankel and publisher-in-waiting Pinch Sulzberger happier, since they would at last see the back of James "Fingers" Greenfield, Hoge's predecessor. Ordinarily such a high-level transition warrants a lengthy office memo that devotes about two-thirds of its space to obligatory niceties about the incumbent and the remaining third to his replacement. But the Greenfield-Hoge memo consisted of three paragraphs of over-the-top praise for Greenfield, followed by one lonely, telling sentence about Hoge—something to the effect of *Next week, Warren Hoge will move his desk to the eighth floor*. The memo gave a tacit but clear signal of the very muted level of support Frankel

is willing to grant Hoge.

When Hoge went scouting for a deputy, his eyes fell upon Adam Moss, the former editor of *7 Days*, which, of course, was the template for *Blocks*. But their meeting went nowhere. Hoge reportedly feared competition from the tyro-ish Moss, and Moss later indicated that he was not willing to be another editor's lackey.

Hoge finally settled on Claudia Payne, the ferocious-looking editor of the paper's Style section. Her selection shocked many in the *Times*'s ranks, in part because she has made no secret of her low opinion of Hoge and in part because the magazine post represents a lateral, rather than upward, career move. But the canny Payne has her reasons: by her estimate, Hoge won't last more than two or three years in the job, and then the magazine will be hers to edit.

Moss, by the way, had also been in contact with Goldberger, who was looking for someone to edit the Sunday paper's Arts & Leisure section. That didn't work out either—Goldberger and managing editor Joseph Lelyveld felt that the baby-faced, not-at-all-intimidating Moss would have required too much hand-holding to work at the chilly, uncharitable *Times*. Moss went away from his meetings with Goldberger amazed that he hadn't been treated with greater reverence.

As it turns out, the fact that Moss did not become a *Times* man may have had less to do with his talent for choosing stories and writers than with his talent for choosing mentors. His main booster at the paper of record is none other than Frank Rich, who once wrote for Moss, in Moss's *Esquire* days, and whose girlfriend, Alex Witchel, wrote for Moss in his *7 Days* days. —J. J. Hunsecker

Our reports of
the insane
culture-desk
standoff touched
off an outbreak
of interoffice
pettiness



Steve



Brian

WHO'LL GET BURNED BY THE *BONFIRE* DEBACLE?

Look Who's Talking Too rendered his comeback the shortest in film history). It was a studio—Warner Bros., which in 1989 scored hits with *Lethal Weapon 2*, *Batman* and *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* but last year spent upwards of \$75 million casting, filming and promoting Brian De Palma's *Bonfire of the Vanities*. Just how big a disaster is *Bonfire*? In its opening three days, the film took in \$3.02 million, a pathetic sum for a movie playing on 1,373 screens. The average per-screen take for the opening weekend was \$2,205, which works out, on the basis of 15 showings a weekend, to a national average of 29 people per showing.

You read correctly. An average of just 29 people attended each screening of a film once touted as an Oscar contender. Which is why the big question in Hollywood at the start of 1991 is "Who at Warners is going to take the fall?"

Under normal circumstances, a studio can weather a blow like *Bonfire*. But Warners chairman Steve Ross has been saddled with such an enormous mountain of 1980s-vintage debt that he simply can't afford to take in only \$3 million opening weekend on a \$75 million investment.

Obviously, Ross will not punish himself for the film's failure, so at the moment the studio's executive offices are paralyzed by conjecture over who'll get the heaveho. Executive vice president Mark Canton, Prince's best pal, who released *Graffiti Bridge* under the studio's imprimatur, has been out of the day-to-day responsibilities of running Warners for a year, and is therefore in the clear. President

of theatrical production Bruce Berman is telling people he wasn't responsible for green-lighting the picture. President and COO Terry Semel tried to duck the issue by claiming the *Bonfire* decisions were made at a lower level than his office.

But what about executive vice president of theatrical production Lucy Fisher, heretofore regarded as the "Stealth studio executive," as the fall guy—er, girl? Fisher, the wife of producer Doug Wick, has long been protected at the studios by her relationships with Steven Spielberg and Francis Coppola, and she has always had a reputation in Hollywood for smarts, dignified reserve and political correctness.

During *Bonfire*'s preproduction phase, Fisher boasted about how she was changing the ending to make it more palatable to American audiences, and how it was her idea to elevate Bruce Willis's character. It was also her idea, she claimed, to "solve" the book's alleged racism by casting black actor Morgan Freeman to play the judge, who was a white Jew in the book.

Luckily for Fisher, by the time blame was being assigned she was temporarily gone, saved by a fortuitous maternity leave.

At the end of December, Warners chairman Bob Daly gave an interview to *New York Times* financial-news reporter Geraldine Fabrikant in which he expressed utter amazement at the critical reaction to the picture. "Every reviewer who read the book put us away," he said, either disingenuously or stupidly. Excuse me, Bob, but... the book was a household-name best-seller. *Of course every critic would have read the book.*

Had Fabrikant been on the ball, she might have called various other studio heads for their opinions of Daly's dodge and heard a common-sense response like this: You can change a piece of literature

that hardly anyone reads (an Updike novel, say), and you can change a popular novel that hardly anyone cares about earnestly (an Elmore Leonard crime novel), but you can't screw around with a book that has so captivated America—especially younger, intelligent, moviegoing America.

At the same time that *Bonfire* was self-immolating, Willis was finishing Joel Silver's *Hudson Hawk* for Tri-Star. To the absolute chagrin of Akio Morita and Michael Schulhof of Sony, *Hawk*'s budget went from \$34 million to a boggling \$75-million, and Tri-Star executives were complaining that the dailies were terrible and that Willis was going over the top in his "Aren't I cute?" *Moonlighting* mode. Most people believe the blame for *Hawk* will be placed firmly on the shoulders of Silver, who has been known actually to relish going over budget just for the thrill of profligacy. He has been quasi-blacklisted at Fox, Paramount, Disney, Columbia and now Tri-Star for his excesses.

Guess where his next picture is? Warners. Originally Silver signed a gigantic producing deal at the studio to make "Joel Silver-type" movies (read "big-budget blood-gushers"). But now Steve Ross isn't so sure he can afford to have Silver on board and has issued an order to slow up everything in development and make damn sure there are proper financial controls in place.

Or, to put it his way: as Steve Ross told Terry Semel, who told Mark Canton, who told Bruce Berman, who told senior vice president of production Lance Young, *Joel Silver may bankrupt Tri-Star, but he's not going to get me bounced out of a job.*

See you Monday night at Mortons.

—Celia Brady

Obviously, Steve

Ross will not

punish himself

for *Bonfire's*

failure

John Malkovich
Andie MacDowell

*Stylish,
selfish
and broke.*

*They lost
everything
and found
each other.*

THE OBJECT OF BEAUTY

Love is more than dollars and sex.

AVENUE PICTURES AND BBC FILMS PRESENT A JON S. DENNY PRODUCTION A MICHAEL LINDSAY-HOGG FILM JOHN MALKOVICH ANDIE MACDOWELL "THE OBJECT OF BEAUTY"
JOSS ACKLAND RUDI DAVIES AND LOLITA DAVIDOVICH MUSIC BY TOM BÄHLER EDITED BY RUTH FOSTER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID WATKIN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CARY BROKAW



PRODUCED BY JON S. DENNY WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MICHAEL LINDSAY-HOGG

AVENUE
PICTURES

COMING IN FEBRUARY TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU

INSIDE the World of Professional Trend Spotters,
the People Whom Big Corporations Pay Millions to Predict What You'll Be
Wearing, Eating and Thinking a Year from Now

TOMORROW'S FORECAST CALLS FOR SHIMMERY FABRICS, PORTABLE FAX MACHINES, SENEGALESE CUISINE AND HEROIC ROMANTICISM



IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE A LINE OF WORK CUSHIER THAN FAITH POPCORN'S. THE FAMOUS TREND expert, who coined the term *cocooning* and runs a consulting firm called BrainReserve, gets paid good money to read lots of magazines, watch lots of television, see lots of movies and chat with lots of ordinary people. Once these tasks are completed—and they constitute the grueling, shoe-leather part of her job—Popcorn and her 20-odd employees brainstorm vigorously, synthesizing their on-the-street observations into grandiose, *USA Today*-ready forecasts of trends to come. We're not talking Gulf war prospects and structural unemployment and durable-goods orders here; we're talking "We want meat loaf; we want big, fat turkey sandwiches—we want Dine-O-Mat."

For her ability to make such predictions—the one above is culled from her 1988 declaration that after eight years of Ronald Reagan, America was moving toward "Tradition," a facet of which is "Mom Food"—Popcorn receives up to \$1 million per consulting project from clients such as Eastman Kodak, Pillsbury and Campbell's. For another \$12,000 a year Popcorn will assemble for any CEO a bimonthly box of kitsch she calls a Trend-Pack. It is nothing more than a sampler of currently popular consumer goods—one recent offering included a hand-held Nintendo game, a worldbeat-music tape, herbal energizer pills and a New Age manual on self-healing—but executives from PepsiCo, Philip Morris and Unilever subscribe nevertheless. They like Popcorn

by Lynda Edwards



In a society awash in the newly passé, trend agents can make out tomorrow's hot azures, fashionable self-mutilations, hip Third World cuisines and stylish ontologies.

ILLUSTRATION BY EVERETT PECK

for her putative hipness; with her spiky hair and bright lipstick she looks like a corporate Laurie Anderson, one step ahead of the mainstream—an invaluable consultant to the starchy high-finance types who market everything we buy.

And she's hardly a one-woman industry. Thousands of people are scanning the globe as you read this, staking out tomorrow's fads and crazes in what has become a multimillion-dollar industry. In New York and Paris there are "trend shops," whose researchers are paid to eavesdrop in streets and offices, gyms and taxicabs, political rallies and sporting events—all just to find out your 1992 moods and yearnings. One Rhinebeck, New York-based trend shop describes itself, in all seriousness, as an "interdisciplinary strike force, flexible and mobile, structured to respond instantly to the first tremors of the socioeconomic and political seismograph."

Ridiculous as that sounds, corporate America will apparently throw its money at anyone who self-confidently claims he can divine the coming Zeitgeist. John Naisbitt, a failed businessman who in 1978 pleaded guilty to concealing assets during bankruptcy proceedings, now earns as much as \$15,000 per corporate appearance on the strength of his best-selling books *Megatrends* and *Megatrends 2000*. Naisbitt paints a glowing, complexity-free picture of the *fin de* millennium in 2000, published early last year: the nineties, he says, will bring peace, prosperity and an end to hunger. Alvin Toffler, a former *Fortune* writer, has enjoyed similar success with his trend books, *Future Shock* and now *Powershift*, which praises Michael Milken for "freeing thousands of companies from [financial] dependence on banks and insurance companies." Toffler earns about \$10,000 per speech from clients like AT&T and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

The common thread that runs through the visions of these big-name trend spotters is relentless optimism. In their view, a forthcoming trend is almost always occasion for stepped-up consumer demand and improvements in quality of life, even if the trend itself is born of unfortunate news. In 1989 a New York-based trend shop called Here & There advised Federated Department Stores, the conglomerate that owns Bloomingdale's, that consumers in their twenties are worried enough about global warming to "plan around it." Buoyed by Here & There's words, Federated introduced a line of lightweight clothing that could be worn through nine months of increasingly warm weather. "We marketed it using the ecology theme," says Patrick Magary, a vice president at Federated, who adds that the alarmist garments sold quite well. It's this kind of ingenuity that inspires huge corporations to remain blindly loyal to the trend spotters' edicts. "They tell us a lot of acetate and nylon show up in street fashion," says a marketing executive at General Motors, another Here & There client. "That means a move from flat car colors to shimmering ones. We use lots of sources and our own market surveys, but Here & There's advice is important. It works. I don't know why."

THE COUTURE INDUSTRY RELIES HEAVILY ON THE DICTATES of four Paris-based trend shops—Promostyl, Trend Union, Dominique Pechlars and Nigel French—that go to the unusual length of deploying young agents around the globe, to locations as far-flung as Finland, Brazil,

Australia, Nigeria, Japan and, of course, the United States. For two or three years the agents stake out trends the way John Le Carré protagonists stake out Moscow, skulking about their assigned cities, eavesdropping on slangy café conversations, noting new street fashions, furtively snapping photographs and keeping up with local newspapers, clubs, exhibits, films, cant, obsessions. They log their observations into little notebooks, one for each trend they have deduced. (One trend agent currently has notebooks labeled AIR POLLUTION, ARCANERELIGIONS and CENTRAL AMERICAN INFLUENCES.) Their Parisian bosses fly in several times a year to examine their notes and photos and listen to their stream-of-consciousness lectures on what they have observed. The bosses then compile their charges' findings into flashy publications called trend books, which are sold to corporate clients and fashion designers.

Promostyl and Trend Union publish several trend books annually, priced at about \$1,500 apiece. Each has a theme—spring 1990 subjects included Crystals, Mysticism and Gardens—and is filled with evocative photos. Sometimes the young agents will publish trend books on a freelance basis, giving them Magritte-ish titles like *The Tang of Quick Youth*, *My Dreams of Love Are in Neon* and *The Bittersweetness of Music Barely Heard*. *Bittersweetness* features a photo of David Letterman looking momentarily wistful on the set of his show, accompanied by the caption "The Postmodern Arch will be replaced by the Modernist impulse toward transformative emotion, although, naturally, the American will be incapable of sustaining the emotion. Superficiality punctuated by a fleeting sense of shame should provide the therapeutic frisson for those too shallow to achieve redemption."

Another trend book, published last year by a small French

Daunting superconsultant Faith Popcorn cocoons with some of her \$2,000-a-pop Trend-Packs.



Soon we will all live this way: Fortune writer turned Powershift guru Alvin Toffler demonstrates his foolish-looking but ultraconvenient cordless-phone-and-laptop-in-the-wilderness life-style.

trend shop called Éclat, dissects the resurgent popularity of the Three Stooges among college students: "Mo's [*sic*] angry question, which always precedes one of his violent episodes, is the question of all existentialist men demanding meaning from a void, 'Hmmm, a wise guy, huh?' The only response — from the void that is Curly — is the tragic 'Nyuck! Nyuck! Nyuck!'" In the same book, Bart Simpson is described as a "tiny parti-colored speck of rebellion, a Bogartian symbol of integrity."

JEAN-PAUL DORAT, A RAKISH, PONYTAILED 27-YEAR-OLD agent for Éclat, sits at a table smack in the middle of a bustling coffee shop in Manhattan's financial district, one of those nondescript power-breakfasting places that charge \$6.35 for orange juice and a bagel. It's 5:30 a.m., but the restaurant is filled with anxious young securities analysts, the last vestiges of the boom-boom 1980s. They yell across the room, wheel on Gucci'd feet, snap their *Wall Street Journals* in the air and bellow loudly at one another's jokes. It may be the nineties, but here they still wear slicked-back hair and Italian suits and want very much to be seen.

Jean-Paul is, situationally, very much like one of *Saturday Night Live's* Coneheads: he looks different from those around him, he's observing what he regards as a lower form of life, and he says he's from France. Paris-bred and -educated, Jean-Paul has been assigned to track trends among young, well-off professionals by observing them in their natural habitats. In 1989 he earned \$50,324.32 as a trend agent — a fact he verifies by proudly producing his W-2's. While the young Wall Streeters buzz around him, oblivious to his presence, he scribbles notes about their clothing and conversations.

"They use the words *good* and *bad* to describe colleagues," Jean-Paul observes. "That's new, since last year.

"The Scrap Bar," says one of them, a girl wearing a dress made entirely of scarves. The youths wander away.

"The Scrap Bar," Jean-Paul whispers. "Well, a pose, but at least an interesting one. No Nazi trinkets, did you see? The labels on their shirts were 100% COTTON. But this is their regular meeting place, you can tell, and that intrigues me." He glances up at the pale stone figures of the heroic dead, then closes his eyes. His face is intent, like that of a mathematician unraveling a knotty equation. "Something is happening," he says. "I can sense a new trend."

AS INANE AND CAPRICIOUS AS TREND SPOTTING SOUNDS, it has been around for 25 years, an unlikely product of the sociopolitical upheavals of the 1960s. For decades, corporations pitched all of their products — cars, appliances, cigarettes — to sedate middle-aged homeowners, and advertising was hardly the supercharged, kill-or-be-killed profession it is now. But suddenly corporate America had to contend with the consequences of the baby boom, which begat young, single, vaguely rebellious consumers with lots of money and no intention of spending it on large, sensible purchases like washing machines and garage-door openers. They spent their money on whims, and they couldn't be ignored; in the sixties, for the first time in history, people under the age of 30 were the main consumers of snack food, cameras, records and paperbacks.

Analysis of past buying patterns seemed to be of little use in predicting the acquisitive mood of the new American youth culture. Equally frustrating, young Americans were influenced by British trends. Corporations suddenly understood the value of off-the-street dispatches from trend spotters, especially since, by virtue of their wealth and numbers, the baby-boomers had begun to define how over-30 consumers wanted to look and

TREND AGENTS

log their findings in notebooks, one for each trend they've deduced—Jean-Paul has volumes labeled AIR POLLUTION, ARCAINE RELIGIONS and CENTRAL AMERICAN INFLUENCES

Good is no longer interchangeable with *nice* — also new. It means value judgments. I counted four of them carrying classics — two Dickenses, a Hugo...well, a Cheever — with moral themes. But do you know what really shocks me?" He leans forward, his dark eyes burning. "There are no red ties anymore. Their ties are...*green*!" So it's the 1990s after all.

Later the same day Jean-Paul is once again on the prowl, this time around Columbus Circle. He spots a group of skinheads lounging near a monument dedicated to the dead seamen of the U.S.S. *Maine*. Pay dirt! He springs into action: "Your look is fantastic, evolutionary, postfascist. I need it for my book," he tells them. He questions the friendly but bewildered youths about every item of clothing and jewelry on their bodies — where they got it, how they put it together, how they do their hair.

"And where are you going?" he asks.

sound — within three or four years of the Summer of Love, even dads had long, long sideburns. Products like scuba gear and sports cars began to sell, not because they exuded homespun tradition or patrician classiness but because they were hip.

It wasn't until the mid-1970s that haphazard reporting coalesced into a thriving industry. Faith Popcorn, née Plotkin — she changed her name because a boyfriend once called her Popcorn and "I said I like that name. And I changed it. It was the sixties" — left her job at the Smith Greenland advertising agency to open BrainReserve in 1974. Beginning in 1975, John Naisbitt, now 62, took two trend shops under before hitting the jackpot with *Megatrends*. And most of the Parisian trend shops opened their doors during the seventies. The reasons for the trend boom are manifold. Whereas trends in the sixties were more or less self-explanatory, reflecting their pro-

genitors' genuine, if attenuated, interests in Hinduism, Afrocentrism, psychedelia, radical politics, blue-collar roots and so on, seventies phenomena — salad bars, personal-care products, CB radios, jojoba, disco, cocaine, macramé — seemed to occur apropos of pretty much nothing and therefore required deciphering by experts.

The growth of professional trend spotting also owes a lot to the field's lucrateness and to the fact that it requires nothing in the way of credentials or track record. Naisbitt claimed that he had spent time as an undergraduate at Harvard and had later worked as a "special adviser to President Johnson," until a 1985 article in *Washingtonian* magazine reported that he had taken a six-week summer course at Harvard and had never advised Johnson personally. While *Megatrends*, which has sold more than 8 million copies since its publication in 1982, made Naisbitt rich by preaching the merits of the nonhierarchical, humanistic corporation, free of management-worker conflict and official titles, the two dozen staffers the Naisbitt Group employed in its 1984 prime earned meager wages, were ordered to fill out time sheets and had to ask permission to go to the bathroom. Naisbitt now has only two full-time researchers.

Elsewhere on the Naisbitt front, a business newsletter called *The John Naisbitt Trend Letter* is published twice a month by a group called Global Network. But Naisbitt does not report, edit or oversee the publication of the newsletter. "He sold his name to us," a Global Network employee says, "but Naisbitt has less to do with trends than Roy Rogers does with chicken."

And absolutely nothing to do with hard statistical research. Whereas comprehensive marketing-services companies like the WPP Group and Young & Rubicam offer packages that include marketing strategies, actual advertising campaigns, consumer research, demographic surveys and, yes, consumer-trend hypotheses, the Naisbitt Group relies on a clipping service and phone interviews. So what's the difference between a marketing company and Naisbitt's trend shop? "[They] know numbers," says a former Naisbitt employee. "We don't."

Even those trend shops that purport to use numbers and thoroughgoing research, like Popcorn's, sometimes rely on less than absolute fact. Last year a well-known baked-goods company asked BrainReserve to answer the following questions: "What are the coming American breakfast trends?" "How do Americans feel about mornings; about eating in the morning?" "How does an American aged 27-39 react if confronted with bread at breakfast?"

To answer such a query, Popcorn will first dip into her computerized TalentBank, essentially an enormous Rolodex of experts in various fields who are willing to chat with Popcorn and her staff. In this case the TalentBank would be culled for nutritionists, cookbook authors, dietitians and bakers, who would then be interviewed. Other BrainReserve staffers would go on shopping sprees, visiting grocery stores, specialty shops and bistros in order to ferret out the stylish new breakfast items on the market. A videotape of breakfast scenes from popular television shows and movies would be

WE MAKE THE CALL

SPY FORECAST

Given that SPY's trend-spotting credentials are no less substantive than Faith Popcorn's and John Naisbitt's — indeed, *The New York Times* recently described SPY as a "trendy" magazine, which probably makes us overqualified — we decided to enter the prognosticating fray and take a whack at spotting the nascent decade's emerging trends.

There is no charge for this service.

In keeping with Popcorn's practice of coining trend-related buzzwords — she has given us *cocooning*, *WOOFs* ("well-off old folks," alluding to senior citizens' increasing share of the nation's disposable income), *skippies* (schoolchildren whose parents, guilt-ridden, give them lots of money instead of quality time), *cashing out* (the phenomenon of male professionals' forsaking their high-paying office jobs in order to realize dream pursuits like running an inn or sailing around the world), and *MOBYs* and *DOBYs* (for "mother-old, baby-young" and "daddy-old, baby-young" people, who wait until their late thirties or forties to have children) — we have compiled some of our predictions into a glossary of glib, soon-to-be-on-everyone's-lips lingo.

By the way, the hot 1994 color will be aubergine.



DESERT-STORM CHIC

The post-baby-boomer generation finally gets a line of Army-Navy surplus to call its own — more mottled-khaki than olive, and germ-warfare-resistant to boot. Servicemen will return by the tens of thousands with Islamic war brides. Stephen Frears and Hanif Kureishi will collaborate on a taut, angry cinematic exploration of the culture clashes inherent in Arab-Western couplings, starring Ed Harris and Talisa Soto. The film, an art-house success, will be adapted by CBS into an unsuccessful situation comedy starring Gerald McRaney.

HALCYONING

The embrace of goods and services from the country's preindustrial past, and the rejection of modern conveniences once welcomed as innovations. Manifestations will include the renewed vogue for home delivery of bottled, unhomogenized milk with the cream floating on top; pemmican and hardtack repackaged as native regional cuisine; abolition of presidential-election primaries in favor of convention-selected candidates; reemergence of beloved village idiots; abolition of the designated hitter in the American League; repopulation and reforestation of blighted urban areas by indigenous Native American tribes — e.g., Algonquians in Detroit, Leni-Lenapes in Newark.

DO-C's (DOUBLE-CLERIC HOUSEHOLDS)

As the taboos against female and homosexual-male admittance into the clergy erode, so will the inhibitions of ministers and rabbis who work alongside one another.

THE TRENDS OF THE NINETIES!

MICROTECHING

The trends toward miniaturization and simplification will enable individuals to own products that, like the home espresso machines of the 1980s, were once thought to be strictly "industrial": home snow machines—compact, lawnmower-size versions of the kind used to manufacture powder at Stowe and Aspen—will guarantee white Christmases no matter what the weather or climatic conditions; home surgical lasers will enable individuals to remove their own cataracts.

THE MAUDE SYNDROME

The growing physical and fiscal might of older women, coupled with the frustration of young men who desire intimacy but fear the disease and pregnancy risks inherent in condomless sex, will result in so-called Harold-and-Maude couples: young men paired with sexually inactive, optimally infertile women over 60. This phenomenon will receive extensive coverage in *New York* magazine: "He's no Joe Gillis. And she's no Norma Desmond. They're just your typical 26-year-old-graphic-designer-and-seventysomething-widow couple, and they say they're for real."

NIKES (NO-INCOME KIDS WITH EDUCATIONS)

Recent college graduates who, owing to the 1990-91 recession's depletion of the job market, will be forced to live with their parents and work in tolerably "brainy" minimum-wage jobs: clerk in bookstore, ticketing agent in box office of nearby repertory theater, assistant to florist, waiter in café that serves Celestial Seasonings teas, intern at satirical monthly magazine.

NIKIs (NO-INCOME KIDS WITH INHERITANCES)

Recent college graduates who, owing to the 1990-91 recession's depletion of the job market, will be forced to extend their planned one-year "hiatuses" into decade-long trailings of the Grateful Dead or, in the event of Jerry Garcia's death, Little Feat.

RECESSION CHIC

Widespread joblessness will beget a new subculture of Woody Guthrie-ish singer-traveler-folklorists. Models will stride runways dressed as dust-bowl troubadours—in loose, drapery woolens and flannels meant to be worn for weeks at a time.

SYNDROMING

Scientists have recently alleged that alcoholism is traceable to a specific heritable gene in one's genetic makeup; soon all unsavory facets of any personality will be attributable to inherited traits and/or chemical imbalances named for researchers who "discover" them. If a Dr. Smith discovers a gene that makes people desire heavy, cholesterol-rich foods, fat people will be described as victims of Smith's Ingestion Syndrome. —David Kamp



compiled and examined as if it were the Zapruder tape (*Wait! What's that in Theo Huxtable's hand? A cruller? An éclair? Rewind! Rewind!*). Focus groups representing a cross section of the American populace would be asked to declaim on the concept of breakfast.

And that's not all you would get, says a former Brain-Reserve employee: "Faith's reports are also spiced with her personal ideas"—ideas gleaned from impromptu market research sessions with, say, her stylist and her personal trainer—"which, depending on your view, are either visionary or crackpot." In the case of the baked-goods company, Popcorn decided, independent of her staff's research, that cookies at breakfast were a coming trend and therefore merited mention in the report.

IF TREND SPOTTERS LIKE NAISBITT AND POPCORN DO good business despite methodology no more rigorous than a newspaper feature writer's, it's probably because they tell their corporate clients what they want to hear: they have seen the future, and there's nothing very bad in it. But many of the trend books from the French agents, the ones who actually stalk the streets of New York and Los Angeles and San Francisco, have significantly darker undertones than their American counterparts. Take the one Jean-Paul and his trend-spotting buddies are currently working on, *Attitudes to Adopt When Approaching the Abyss*.

Which means what, exactly?

"A new trend is coming that will smash the complacent world of the grasping bourgeoisie. I believe some of the brighter ones"—bright, Jean-Paul implies, by American standards—"sense its approach."

Two years ago, says Jean-Paul, the country was riding a trend toward increased irony and emotional alienation, with an even greater emphasis on eighties-style greed and morning-in-America jingoism. Military tailoring (sailor suits, coats with epaulets) was predicted; navy blue, burnt orange and brown were forecast. Then, suddenly, last year, everything changed.

Éclat agents heard the Drexel Burnham disaster being referred to in explicitly moralistic terms. They noted a big increase in the number of stores selling African and Shaker crafts—items fraught with religious significance (primitive and ascetic, respectively), from which their upscale purchasers must derive some kind of solace. Lighter, brighter colors appeared in street fashion. Gothic architecture came back into favor. After sifting through these omens and clues, the agents formulated a new trend for 1992: There will be a trend away from irony. ("Americans were never good at it," Jean-Paul writes in his trend book on the subject, "always getting it confused with sarcasm.") There will be a trend toward heartfelt emotions and mysticism. Already smothered by financial collapse, the greedy Gordon Gekkos and their young apostles will be reviled and despised. Or, in Jean-Paul's words, "Social relations currently defined by the Hegelian cash nexus will be destroyed. It will be every man for himself." The cultural icons to emerge from the rubble will be religious and political revolutionaries.

And, *every bit as important*, the big colors of 1992 will

be ethereal: pale yellow, champagne, amethyst, azure, silver, gold and arctic white. Flowing, draped lines will replace tailoring. "Women will dress like goddesses and angels," says Jean-Paul. Street boutiques have already put aside military clothing and replaced it with tunics, one-shouldered dresses, bales of ballet tulle and long scarves that flutter like wings.

The new spiritualism will force major changes in the way advertisers market luxury products, which for years have been pedaled as the gross fruits of sheer wealth. One British advertising executive who has worked on the Harrod's, Hennessy and Porsche accounts is especially distraught by the trend spotters' news. "It's not that we didn't know there were warm, caring consumers out there," he says. "It's just that we never gave a shit about them. Well, we'll simply do our best with this warmth-and-caring thing. We'll adjust. We market *aura*, the thing you notice from bus windows. You find kindness attractive? Imagine you're on a bus, and through the window you see your ideal kind man getting out of his car to help—a sick kitten! Quick! What kind of car is that

min Moore and Chaps by Ralph Lauren. At a typical meeting, executives from the paint, paper and textile industries and from interior- and fashion-design firms bring in shells, pieces of signs, feathers, bus tickets, flowers and snips of fabric, and they argue. Once they reach a consensus on a hue, fabrics are dyed to match the color of the agreed-upon artifact.

"Color moods go in cycles, meaning that in two or three years a clothing color reaches saturation," explains Margaret Walch, associate director of the Color Association. "That means a complete mood shift. And the trends seem to come out of thin air. If they just moved around the color wheel, we wouldn't need trend spotters." For instance, Li Edelkoort, the head of Trend Union, was credited by *The New York Times* with predicting the 1989 orange boom—orange being a notoriously unpopular clothing color—simply by noting that New York City's 1987 jack-o'-lanterns possessed a certain *je ne sais quoi*. The trend spotters correctly predicted the eighties' neo-Beat black—1984 was the blackest year in decades, according to the Color As-

Megatrends author John Naisbitt gets a consummately nineties-ish rubdown in his state-of-the-art Telluride, Colorado, home.



La mode de l'été: swatches, photos and artifacts from Trend Union's summer 1991 trend book—which sells for \$1,500

kind man driving? Two-door? What colors is he wearing? Don't think; *answer!* With those answers we can take a complete bastard and make him *look* like your sexy, suave St. Francis of Assisi...until he speaks."

Color forecasting is especially vital to the fashion and interior-design industries, because the correct fibers and dyes must be ordered, usually from Third World countries, at least a year in advance. A mistake in forecast can leave retailers with racks of unsellable colors. In 1912, Mexican farmers grew fields full of coral-colored poinsettias whose petals produced a perfect dye for the predicted "Peach Boom." Purple boomed instead. The farmers were stuck with fields that could have been planted with something practical, like indigo, or food.

Color meetings are held twice a year under the aegis of the Color Association of the United States, which has dictated fashionable colors since 1915. The association's members include the American Paper Institute, Benja-

ONE TREND BOOK dissects the Three Stooges' appeal and describ

sociation. That was the year of upscale black food—tortilla chips, pasta dyed with squid ink—as well as black furniture, clothing and wall tile.

"People turned to all-black because it was safe, the historically proven way to look hip," says Joe Ieraci of Promostyl. "You can even be old, over 40, and look okay in it. One big trend of the eighties was that no one looks at artists for style anymore. Artists became businessmen, even the young ones. Conservative, cautious. So dressing all-black, like artists did in olden days, was only a little more daring than dressing like an investment broker."

Needless to say, the new St.-Francis-of-Assisi man will step out in shimmering 1990s colors as opposed to red and black, the so-called Fascist colors popular way back in the 1980s.

"Fascism will always have an allure," explains Marc Surrat, a 26-year-old agent for Éclat. He hands me a six-month-old trend book filled with photos of teenagers in military gear. "This stuff was Romanian, did okay in Paris. No one wears it now. Some Israeli commando stuff showed up on dance floors. But I don't think the Fascist style will be a strong one for the nineties."

Because people will repudiate Fascism?

"Oh, *please!* No one thinks about it enough to repudiate it." Marc riffles through the pages of an Éclat trend book, which contains photos of happy middle-class young people wearing bits and pieces of uniforms from recently top-

pled dictatorships. "Did your grandfather fight in World War II?" he asks. "Mine also. The generation coming after us has no collective memories of Fascism or unpopular war. What attracts them is the look, the clean, strong lines, the physicality. I don't make judgments. I just note that the visuals are fantastic." He frowns thoughtfully. "I wonder why the Fascists always have the best uniforms."

The new youth models, uniformwise, are romantic revolutionaries, and the prevailing wind is from the south. Latin Americans will offer the fashion tips to absorb and archetypes to imitate, partly because there is a growing Latin population in the U.S., and partly because the spectacle of brave Guatemalans casting ballots and of Salvadorans protesting *desaparecidos* is more inspiring than the sight of East Germans storming shopping malls and Russians bitching about shortages of cigarettes and cooking oil.

Jean-Paul decides to gauge the prevailing winds at a get-together with the East Village Rat Crisis, not a post-punk garage band but a grass-roots organization that addresses the very real problem of rats infesting the homes of the Hispanic, Indian and Asian immigrants who live in the neighborhood. Residents watch film of rats chewing their way through concrete, glass and plastic slabs. Rats swimming underwater, scaling high walls. Huge, ugly, unstoppable rats. An activist shows photos of children with rat bites. Residents are on their feet, shouting.

"What are you looking for here?" I whisper to Jean-Paul.

"Heroes and heroines," he whispers back. "Especially if

where flower petals descend from the ceiling onto the dancers. ("It used to dump black powder and blood-red streamers. *This* is romantic.") Jean-Paul jots down conversational snippets to support his theory. "They used to talk only about drugs, sex and money," he says. "Now they talk about an artistic cause, saving the NEA."

It's all true. Torted-up, mousse-haired women come and go, talking of Andres Serrano. On the bar there is a jar labeled DONATE TO SAVE EROTIC ART. Patrons approach and drop in paper bills with great ceremony, sometimes receiving applause. "Yes! I know it's not exactly saving bleeding babies in Beirut!" Jean-Paul snaps peevishly, his sociological cool suddenly giving way to vituperation. "They aren't revolutionaries, they just want to feel like revolutionaries. Saving erotic art is less frightening than saving the poor. One would have to *deal* with the poor to do that, and *that* could be frightening. People become part of a trend because it makes them feel important without forcing them to change."

Jean-Paul's cynicism about the new trend away from cynicism is buttressed by the words of Ernest Dichter, the Long Island University professor who is regarded as the grandfather of consumer psychology for his pioneering studies, for CBS, of audience-consumer behavior and response. "Trend spotting is the study of surfaces," says Dichter, an authoritative voice of Eurocondescension. "Surfaces are important because surfaces are all most people will ever have. Few people will ever do a single

es Bart Simpson as a "tiny parti-colored speck of rebellion, a Bogartian symbol of integrity"

they don't know they are charismatic. I write down what they wear even if it's ugly, even if it's all wrong. See, I sketch the way they stand. You cannot learn character or charisma, but you can buy style to fill in the gaps."

He nods toward a young Hispanic man standing in the crowd. "Look at them listen to him. The women are looking at him. He's not handsome. The clothes are dreadful, the cut all wrong. But he has it. Drapes the jacket over one shoulder like a cape. I've seen the look in the street. The young, heroic look."

The Hispanic man is speaking in careful, awkward English about organizing a trip to Mayor Dinkins's office, about being so consistently terrified of attacks that rat fear is the same for him as breathing. This scene, unfolding in a dingy, badly lit walk-up, will soon appear in an \$875 trend book that will go to marketing executives at companies such as Estée Lauder, Anne Klein and Nissan, all past Éclat clients. The talented illustrator will make the scene beautiful and the young man like a Daumier hero. The text may note the importance of good posture to maximize the galvanizing effect of draped clothes.

We enter Quick!, a bar that has tables shaped like giant plastic pigs, and the band plays dance music until the drummer stops to lecture the crowd on Sartre's *Nausea*. The crowd throws food at him. ("See? That proves Americans are bored with ennui," says Jean-Paul, "or maybe they want to dance.") Then we go to a club

brave deed, know true love or the passions of a great cause. Think of affectations as the best clues to the kind of world we long to live in. If you want to know the way the world is going, you must learn to read its affectations."

For his part, Marc Surrat breaks down and confesses — insofar as a handsome, aloof French trend spotter can break down and confess — that he longs to cross over into the realm of deeper meanings and passionate feelings. "Even though I make lots of money, sometimes I think I want to change," he says. He recalls a scene he watched unfold through the window of a restaurant in Manhattan's financial district. A young woman was crying as she wrote a letter. A young waiter started to approach her, hesitated, went back, gazed longingly. Finally, the waiter walked away without speaking to the tearful woman. Marc took notes.

"The fluorescent lighting was ugly, and her sweater, the cut and the color, was all wrong," he says. "I went home and designed a sweater that would have stood up under that light. If she had worn it, the waiter would have stayed."

Marc looks up at me suddenly: "You ask yourself, what kind of person falls in love with a color? It's terrible. The answer is, all kinds — I feel like a director with actors not good enough for my stage. Sometimes I think, even with all of the drawbacks, it must be much more fun to be profound." ■

Jon Weiser SHOOTS HIMSELF



When we asked Jon Weiser to photograph his new line of sportswear, STNT Style C. Delemazure, he decided to use an Olympus camera. *Fine*, we said. And for models, he decided to use the preternaturally flexible dance troupe Pilobolus. *Sure*, we said. And he decided to rent The Joyce Theater. *Fine*, we said. *Great. You're paying, right?* we added. ✂ "The collection," he says, "is more about spirit. It's mini-



malist in terms of style." Weiser points out that although "the use of cotton-lycra jersey for menswear is unique," he does not advise ordinary wearers of his clothes to attempt the semaphoric acrobatics shown here. Or at least not with cameras present. STNT can be found at Charivari (of which Weiser is president), Bloomingdale's, I. Magnin, Fred Segal (Los Angeles) and Susan (San Francisco). 9

Produced by Nian Fish.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA



ACTOR-TIBETOPHILE RICHARD GERE



HOU

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHAYNA BRENNAN

Only SEWIFE!

The Amazing True Tale of How a
Nice Italian-Jewish Mother-of-Three from Brooklyn
Became the First Western
Woman Enthroned as the
Reincarnation of a Tibetan
Buddhist Lama and Won
the Adulation of Millions,
Including Richard Gere

WE WERE CIRCUMAMBULATING THE STUPA. THAT'S what Wib said. The stupa is a kind of giant Buddhist piñata filled with toy guns, rice and bits of paper with prayers written on them. Wib, the spokesman for the Buddhist Center in Poolesville, Maryland, says that circumambulation is an auspicious activity that connects us to the past. After we finished, we went inside to meet Jetsunma, whose name used to be Catharine Burroughs. That was before a visiting lama from Tibet recognized her as the reincarnation of a seventeenth-century holy woman and called for her 1988 enthronement.

The 41-year-old housewife and mother of three was surprised to learn that she'd been a great *bodhisattva*, or "one who lives to help others," around 300 years ago. Before she was informed of her past life, the first Western woman to be identified as a reincarnated lama says, she "knew nothing about Buddhism." "I didn't even know there *was* a Tibet," she says. Born to a Jewish mother and an Italian father in Brooklyn, Burroughs says her background was "very mishmash." "I was a little Catholic for a while," she explains, "and a little Protestant for a while, and I ate like a Jew a lot." She taught herself meditation after her second child was born 18 years ago, and practiced in the basement of her modest

ranch house in suburban Kensington, outside Washington, D.C. "Teachings would come forth" during meditation, she says, and soon she'd converted the basement into a prayer center for fellow local meditators. One day about five years ago a friend called to see if she and her husband might like to meet a Tibetan lama, His Holiness Penor Rinpoche, who was flying into Washington's National Airport.

Burroughs says the meeting, which took place in the airport arrivals lounge, was "like a hair-spray ad" in which a man and woman run toward each other in a field of daisies. When she first saw His Holiness, she said to herself, "This is my teacher. This is my mind. This is my heart." Time, she says, stood still.

The housewife and the lama visited the Washington monuments together and ate hot dogs on the Burroughses' back porch, speaking through an interpreter. His Holiness also spoke to each of Burroughs's meditation students. He asked what Burroughs taught them and how they had found her. "It was basically a teacher's evaluation," Burroughs says. She did well. After interviewing her students, His Holiness felt absolutely certain: Burroughs's teachings were based on

by *Susan Lehman*

Mahayana philosophy — the core principles of which are compassion, loving kindness and generosity — and were decidedly Buddhist. “You can call yourself whatever you want,” he told her, “but you are a Buddhist.”

This came as a surprise to Burroughs, who responded with a good-natured “Well, okay.”

Burroughs says that when his five-day visit to Kensington ended, His Holiness told her, “You’re doing a great job with your students, and why fix it if it ain’t broke? Just go ahead and continue with what you’re doing.” She was im-



LAMA MAMA: clockwise from left, Jetsunma in her crown — “a onetime thing”; Atira (she’s not levitating) and her dad on the family trampoline; from a suburban basement to Nirvana

pressed by the lama’s whatever-works flexibility and relieved that she wouldn’t need to pack up for a Tibetan monastery to study Buddhist teachings for several decades, as *tulkus* (teachers) traditionally do.

His Holiness did leave Burroughs with one piece of advice. At the time of his visit she had been thinking of moving her meditation center out of her basement, and she asked him whether she should try to get some larger facility or just stick with something more modest. Penor Rinpoche told her she ought to go for a “really *big* place.” He predicted that she’d have several choices and that one of these would be “a white house with white columns in the front, a very large place, and [she] shouldn’t be afraid, [she] should go ahead and get that place, because it would work out.” Several months later Burroughs and her family left their rented Kensington home and moved to a big white mansion with white columns on 72 acres of prime horse-country real estate in Poolesville. “Penor Rinpoche was right,” says Burroughs. “His mind is *so amazing*.”

Thirty-five Washington-area Buddhists pitched in to make the purchase possible. Wib Middleton, the Center’s publicist, says the donors are all “of modest means” and that “they really stretched and scraped together what little they had to make a down payment.” The house was “not outrageously

expensive,” Wib says, though the land cost \$6,000 an acre. “We just pulled it off somehow,” he says.

Left to her own devices on the huge new estate, Burroughs began reading books about Buddhism. She wrote His Holiness letters about her studies. After a year she felt compelled to visit him. She and her husband, Michael, an elementary school teacher, traveled to Penor Rinpoche’s monastery in southern India. There were lamas there from all over the world. The couple stayed for four months, taking teachings from the lamas and from Penor Rinpoche. Before she left, in accord with the Buddhist tradition she’d been studying, Burroughs asked His Holiness for a new, spiritual name.

When His Holiness christened her Ahkön Norbu Lhamo, he told her he was not merely giving her a new name but also recognizing her as the reincarnation of Genyenma Ahkön Lhamo, a

seventeenth-century Tibetan female lama whose brother founded the Palyul monastery, over which Penor Rinpoche presides. (“I *knew* there was something different about you,” Burroughs’s mother said when she learned who her daughter had been.)

To make the reincarnation official, Burroughs had to be enthroned as a *tulku* in a centuries-old ceremony. The enthronement took place at Burroughs’s new, Colonial-style meditation center, which had been renamed the Fully Awakened Dharma Continent of Absolute Clear Light, a year after her return from India. Nearly 100 Buddhist monks, nuns and followers from around the world attended the ceremony, as did Penor Rinpoche. They brought symbolic offerings — “cards with the precious elephant, the precious umbrella, the precious this, the precious that,” Burroughs says — and thanked Ahkön Norbu Lhamo for returning to earth after 300 years. The new lama, who would now be called Jetsunma, an honorific that commands great and instantaneous respect among Tibetans, sat on a specially built wooden throne decorated with pink-and-white-painted lotus flowers during the proceedings and wore a crown, “a onetime thing,” she says, that she probably won’t have occasion to wear again. If, as a *tulku*, she wants to cover her head, she can have a ceremonial Buddhist headpiece called a *vajra* hat made up, but, says Burroughs, “this is America, and I don’t think that will be necessary.”

Fame followed the enthronement. She became a sort of Buddhist pinup girl, with monks pasting Jetsunma’s photo on monastery walls throughout India. Curious Buddhists came from all over the world to see what Burroughs calls “the new kid on the dharma block.” Some, she says, came because “they wanted to be able to say they’d been to this lama and that lama and to the girl lama.” (There are

about 2,500 lamas altogether in the world.) Tibetophile Richard Gere invited her for tea at his New York apartment. With all the attention, the new lama says, she felt like a movie star.

As Jetsunma, Burroughs has a new job. She is now "a bridge and a translator," she says, whose task it is to transmit ideas from a very foreign and exotic culture. This takes "a great deal of computation and reevaluation and...abstract jumping," which is not easy for Westerners, who, Burroughs says, tend to think of spirituality as a journey from one place to another. Buddha, she says, teaches that we do not need to go anywhere to find our true nature; it is always there, but we must awaken to it.

The reincarnated lama spends much of her time meeting with visiting Buddhists. "I don't have a very rigid kind of schedule," she says. "I can spend hours and hours and hours in meditation if it's not a busy time." But when she's very busy or traveling, Burroughs says, she can efficiently "minimize [her] practices" so they can be completed in less than an hour. Four monks and 12 nuns live in a converted stable behind the main house and meditation center, and Jetsunma regularly meditates, prays and consults with them. She also takes weekly two-hour turns in a prayer "vigil for peace and the end of suffering for all sentient beings" that continues 24 hours of every day at the Center. Wib says the vigil will continue until all earthly suffering ends, which, he adds, "we feel will be quite a long time."

Serving as the reincarnation of *tulku* Genyenma Ahkön Lhamo is not a burden Jetsunma takes lightly. She is serious about preserving the purity of Buddhist tradition and about keeping the meditation center from becoming what she calls a "kind of vegetable-soup phenomenon." In other words, she won't allow "New Age people or metaphysical thinkers" to teach there. "I am a practical woman," Burroughs says. "If I am going to cross the ocean of suffering, I am not going to do it in a boat that hasn't been tried yet." Meaning, she says, she's happy to practice Buddhism "as it is, without any changes."

Becoming Jetsunma has entailed a few changes in the life of Catharine Burroughs. Realizing that she'd need a long life to accomplish everything she wanted to do, Jetsunma began to diet and exercise shortly after her enthronement. Within a year she dropped 50 pounds. She still wears bright-red nail polish, frosted lipstick and lots of powdery blue eye shadow, but Jetsunma says that sometimes she is obliged to dress differently than she used to. "In my ordinary life," she says, "we're talking blue jeans or above-the-knee skirts. But I wear a traditional *chuba* when I teach, and if I'm doing some dharma function, I wear traditional clothing in order to honor the lineage."

There have been a few other life-style alterations. Buddhist nuns and monks bow whenever she walks by. ("You missed a spot," Burroughs says, tickling a clump of stubble left on the shaved head of one of the


bowing nuns she passes on her way into the house.) She now has a busier travel schedule; she teaches in New York and elsewhere and makes it a point to see the Dalai Lama when he visits the United States.

Jetsunma's husband, whose first reaction when he heard of his wife's seventeenth-century life was "My God, I'm *sleeping* with a *tulku*," has got used to the new situation. He has been a practicing Buddhist as long as she has. Jetsunma has three children. Christopher, who is 18, is a Buddhist. Nineteen-year-old Ben basically agrees with Buddhist ideas in theory but is not drawn to the spiritual life. He works in a tuxedo store, and his karate kick-bag hangs from a tree near the stupa in the backyard. The Burroughses' three-year-old daughter, Atira, knows a few mantras and "how to offer water in little cups and stuff like that," according to her mother, but is too young to really practice Buddhism. Sometimes the family has to wait until Mom has finished her prayer practices and such before she cooks their supper. Other than that, however, the lama's family life is pretty much the same as it always was.

The former Catharine Burroughs's whole life, she insists, is focused on the same thing as it was before her enthronement: helping others to free their minds from the desire, greed, ignorance, pride and ego-lust that cause suffering. Buddhism, she says, offers "an antidote and a pure technology for that."

But when she's not busy spreading enlightenment, Jetsunma enjoys cooking, reading pulp novels and watching movies on the VCR. What would Buddha think about *Lethal Weapon*, the last movie watched by his current earthly representative in suburban Maryland? Buddha, she explains, "was not a blithering idiot who sat on a rock all day and drooled." He was entirely aware of the world around him; he just wasn't attached to or seduced by it. Jetsunma doesn't worry about being seduced by external phenomena. Still, she says, she prefers Motown records to chanting monks.

"I'm a very American person," Jetsunma says, "and I'm not going to change that." She says there are people who start to "do a big dharma dance and sing a dharma tune" when they get involved in Buddhist teaching. "They sort of play up the role a little bit," she says. "But I'm not much for pretending that way." She leans forward in the boxy red velvet living-room armchair that she finds more comfortable than her throne. "I really am an American person," she says, "and I just can't get into sitting on a throne all the time, you know what I mean?"



etsunma's husband's first reaction to hearing about his wife's past life as a seventeenth-century Tibetan holy woman was "My God, I'm *sleeping* with a *tulku*"

G. David Schine became famous as the flamboyantly rich best pal of Roy Cohn and Joe McCarthy. Now he's broke and bitter. His brother-in-law Lester Crown is the creepy ruler of America's largest arms fortune. To Lester, David is the classic no-good brother-in-law—usually played by Jerry Van Dyke—who always expects a handout. To David, Lester is the classic scheming, selfish rich guy—usually played by Edward Arnold. GEORGE RUSH reports on their zillion-dollar battle.

The Red-Baiter *and the* Billionaire

A RAGS-TO-RICHES-TO-RAGS TALE OF GREED, DELUSION, SUICIDE,

FAMILY FEUDING, MISSILES AND ONE GREAT MOVIE



96

LIKE EVERY TALE OF TWO RICH FAMILIES AT WAR, THIS ONE BEGINS AT AN EXTRAVAGANT WEDDING:

in 1950 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, Renee Schine married Lester Crown. The reception was rumored to have cost an almost unheard-of \$100,000. Tenor Lauritz Melchior sang. The guests, 600 of them, strolled through indoor gardens and witnessed three elaborate changes in decor. Five-ton late-forties limousines lined Park Avenue, the prewar champagne flowed, and a big band played "Stardust." But this wedding was more than a caterer's dream, more even than the union of two individuals: it intertwined two proud and contentious families. Renee was the child of self-made real estate tycoon Myer Schine, and

Somebody



Nobody



Somebody



then and now: TOP, DAVID SCHINE (LEFT) AND ROY COHN DOUBLE-DATING, 1954; LEFT, LESTER CROWN MARRIES RENEE SCHINE, 1950; ABOVE, "MOVIE PRODUCER" DAVID AND ARMS BARON LESTER TODAY

Lester was the child of self-made sand-and-gravel tycoon Henry Crown. The celebration at the Waldorf, which Henry Crown partly owned, reflected the achievements of two men who had come up from nothing. Forty years later, the Schines and the Crowns can look to this day as the start of their troubles.

Those troubles are over money, more money and great expectations gone insanely awry. In time Lester Crown, the groom, became the leader of his family, just as the bride's brother G. David Schine became the leader of hers. Once very close, the two men are now clashing bitterly. One might also say that their lives, which began with so much in common, have followed markedly divergent paths.

DAVID SCHINE ACCUSES LESTER CROWN OF RAPING THE SCHINE EMPIRE

Lester runs General Dynamics, a defense contractor with \$10 billion in sales. David was the famous rich-kid pretty-boy sidekick to Joe McCarthy; in 1971 he executive-produced *The French Connection*, and since then—well, in 1971 he executive-produced *The French Connection*. Lester controls a \$1.6 billion fortune—in addition to owning almost a quarter of General Dynamics, the Crown family has huge stock and real estate holdings and has stakes in the Yankees, Aspen Skiing Company and Aspen's chicest hotel, Little Nell's. David has liens on his house. Lester is friends with Henry Kissinger and Laurence Tisch; David is friends with Bill Fugazy. But while David Schine may be down, he's not out. He now accuses Lester of stealing tens of millions of dollars from the Schines, and as he fights to get the

money back he dreams of treble damages.

With its disappearing millions, its conspiracies and its lawsuits, with its penitobarbital and desperate loans and loopily devious protagonists, this story's ideal narrator would be David Schine's old friend and rumored lover Roy Cohn—speaking from beyond the grave.

"THE ENTIRE FAMILY IS NOW THOROUGHLY DISGUSTED WITH YOU AND YOUR atrocious and wicked acts waged against us because of some deep and abnormal hatred you harbor toward the Schine family. . . . It appears now that you have engineered a plan over the years to rape, ruin and squander a once great empire that my father spent his lifetime building." So wrote David Schine to Lester Crown on October 31, 1988. Threatening and hobgoblinish, the "Halloween letter," as it came to be known, lived up to its name. Appropriately, if not quite in English, David claimed that "the wisdom of placing our complete faith with you haunts us." David accused Lester not only of raping and ruining the Schine empire but also of causing David's brother, Richard, to kill himself. Called both a thief and a murderer, Lester perhaps understandably threatened to sue David for defamation.

Lester did not carry out this threat. He did not avoid court, however. In 1989 he found himself the defendant in a federal suit brought by David Schine's six children, the three children of David's deceased sister Doris, and Richard Schine's two sons. David has joined the suit as an intervenor. This suit, the Schines hope, will recapture their lost "empire." They claim that as Lester liquidated Schine Enterprises for them, he pocketed millions and millions of dollars, some of which he returned to the Schines in the form of loans. He is trying to collect on these "loans," the Schines say, even though they were really distributions from the sale of the Schines' property. For his part, Lester claims that the Schines have been living in a collective fool's paradise. They believe they are rich, Lester says, only because he has, over the years, generously provided them around \$90-million. One of Lester's lawyers describes Lester's treatment of his in-laws as "large graciousness just approaching stupidity." Poor Lester. First thief and murderer, now stupid.

It's difficult to know which explanation is more strange—that Lester Crown stole a fortune from the Schines or that he gave it to them. To the Schines, the first explanation must seem the only possible one. A lawyer for Lester says, "The Schines were led to believe they were rich, and they were not." Not rich? What about Myer's empire? The hotels? The land in Florida? As David Schine looks over at his brother-in-law, he must wonder how it can be that the two of them started from exactly the same place but one ended up broke and the other a billionaire. Both their fathers were desperately poor; both simultaneously achieved great wealth. Myer and Henry, and their sons, met that night at the Waldorf on an equal footing. Theirs were nearly identical rags-to-riches stories; how could they have such different endings?

J. MYER SCHINE WAS BORN IN A DIRT-FLOOR COTTAGE IN LITHUANIA IN 1893. He came to America when he was ten, working first in a mill and later on trains, hawking candy. When he was 23, he put up \$1,500 to lease an old roller rink in the Adirondack town of Gloversville, then the glove-making capital of America. He turned the place into a theater, and he and his brother, Louis, made enough money to buy and build theaters in five states.

By 1944, Myer was buying swank hotels like the Roney Plaza in Miami Beach and the Boca Raton Hotel and Club. His triumph came in 1946, when he bought Los Angeles's grand Ambassador, the 500-room Spanish-style hotel that occupied almost 24 garden-filled acres on Wilshire Boulevard. Opened in 1921, the Ambassador was a monument to Old Hollywood. Charlie Chaplin, Gloria

Swanson, Charles Lindbergh and Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald had made it famous. With the glamorous Ambassador as his Rome, Myer Schine in 1950 indeed ruled something like an empire of hotels, real estate and movie theaters.

In 1950, Henry Crown had an empire, too, and had worked just as hard for it. He was born in 1896, the third of seven children. His father, Arie Krinsky, had also come from Lithuania. He had settled in Chicago and changed the family name. Arie sold matches for a living. In 1919, Henry and his brother Sol started a sand-and-gravel company, Material Service, with \$10,000 in savings. During World War II, Henry rounded up \$1 billion in supplies as a procurement officer in his hometown. The war won Henry a lifelong title—"the Colonel"—and enduring contacts that helped turn Material Service into one of the country's largest construction suppliers. Henry branched out into real estate—he helped Conrad Hilton buy the Waldorf along with most of the rest of the Hilton chain, and shortly after Renee and Lester's wedding, he bought the Empire State Building.

When Renee and Lester were married, Myer and Henry were both at a peak of their success, but then their parallel stories crisscrossed. In the fifties, Henry Crown not only bought the Empire State Building but also merged with General Dynamics, an ailing aircraft-maker that he would make prosper with extraordinary skill. Myer was not so fortunate. He saw the Feds break up his theater

munism. Publishing it privately, David sent the pamphlet to corporations, the State Department and the armed forces and had it placed in every Schine hotel room. Cohn's boss, Senator Joseph McCarthy, liked the hotel heir's *Definition*, and so he made David an unpaid consultant on his Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles himself arranged for the 1953 investigative tour that 26-year-old David and 26-year-old Roy made of the U.S. Information Service's European libraries. McCarthy's enemies began to ask why young David Schine wasn't fighting in Korea, and soon enough David's draft board reclassified him as fit for service.

David was not just another soldier,



big shot: DAVID AND ROY ON STRICTLY OFFICIAL BUSINESS IN HAVANA, 1953; WITH MCCARTHY; DAVID AND 1955'S MISS UNIVERSE

chain "monopoly" and was summoned by Senator Estes Kefauver to explain the bookmaking operation at Roney Plaza. In 1957 he boasted that he would turn the Ambassador property into a convention-office-hotel complex that would "dwarf New York's Rockefeller Plaza." The plan came to nothing.

The fifties were a telling time for the sons as well. Myer Schine once said of his son David that "he always wanted to be Somebody." In the fifties, David *was* Somebody. After Andover, he set out to impress his classmates at Harvard, where he arrived in 1945. He hired a private secretary, who took notes in his classes. His black Cadillac convertible had a then-astonishing radio telephone. He walked through Harvard Yard showing everybody a valise packed with \$1,100 in cash. Upon graduating in 1949 he became president of Schine Hotels. Mocambo, Ciro's and the Stork Club were among the places he escorted starlets like Debbie Reynolds. *Mocambo*—where would a young man rather be at midnight in 1952? At Myer's Roney Plaza in Miami Beach, David first met Roy Cohn. "Both of us were about the same age, and both of us were close to Walter Winchell," Cohn remembered in his autobiography. "We hit it off immediately."

After Harvard, David wrote an eight-page pamphlet called *Definition of Com-*

Army secretary Robert T. Stevens accused Cohn of browbeating the military into giving his pal special privileges. McCarthy and Cohn countercharged that the Army brass was holding David "hostage" in an effort to "blackmail" McCarthy into backing off his Red-baiting probe of the Army Signal Corps. McCarthy was said to complain privately that David was more trouble than he was worth. That Cohn should work so feverishly on David's behalf led to talk that they must be lovers. Lillian Hellman nicknamed the Cohn-Schine-McCarthy gang "Bonnie, Bonnie and Clyde." Yet Cohn denied, even to intimates, that he and David ever had an affair. Not long before dying of AIDS-

related cancer, Cohn said to an interviewer, "Nobody who knows me would ever buy that fag stuff. They said I was in bed with Dave Schine. Dave! Who married Miss Universe and has a great bunch of kids." Indeed, David did marry Hellevi Rombin, Miss Universe 1955. Winchell, Dulles, the most beautiful woman in the universe—in the fifties, David Schine was Somebody.

The operations department of Material Service's lime subsidiary is a long way from Mocambo, but that's where Lester Crown spent the 1950s. Lester studied chemical engineering at Northwestern before going to Harvard Business School. He graduated in the celebrated class of 1949—the same year David left Harvard College—joined Material Services and plugged away. Lester's older

ness experience but also something even more important—access to cash. For Lester, a perpetual second banana among the Crowns, the opportunity to take command of the Schines' affairs may have been particularly appealing. Time and again in the 1960s, Lester bailed Myer out. In 1964, Lester arranged for the Crowns to advance Myer more than \$3 million in exchange for the Schines' Palm Beach land. In 1965, Myer agreed to sell all his holdings in what was then one of the biggest real estate deals in U.S. history. When the transaction ran into problems, Lester helped extricate Myer from it profitably. Myer was once so desperate for cash that he put up all his company's stock as collateral for a \$5 million loan from Lester's uncle. Lester lent \$1 million to settle a lawsuit brought by the family of Myer's deceased brother, Louis.

How was David helping out? In 1963 he quit the presidency of Schine Enterprises and Schine Hotels, but his father asked him to be president of the Ambassador. During David's presidency the family had to settle a suit by minority shareholders of the Ambassador who charged that \$7 million had been misappropriated. According to one family member, David's brother and sisters were now determined to remove him from the family business, and Myer agreed. By 1971, the year Myer died, Lester had come to control Schine Enterprises. David wrote Lester to thank him for his "support, time and energy... I shall never forget your generosity [*sic*] in loaning funds." Well, as a matter of fact, he would.

IN RECENT YEARS EVENTS ON THE SCHINE SIDE OF THE FAMILY HAVE TAKEN A tragic turn. David's younger sister Doris died in a car crash in 1986. She left two daughters and a son from a marriage that had ended in divorce years before. In his Halloween letter, even Doris's death was an occasion for David to attack Lester. "My regret is that she met tragic death prematurely before she could resolve the tremendous suffering she underwent because of you." A lawyer for Lester says, "I know of no pressure that was put on [Doris]. What's more likely is that David was telling her she was getting shafted."

At least David did not accuse Lester of actually killing Doris. In the case of his brother Richard Schine's suicide in 1988, David did not let Lester off so easy. "You knew how fragile Dick was yet you abused him so much that he was driven to take his own life," David wrote. "Lester, while you did not administer the fatal overdose personally, you carry the burden of responsibility for his death."

The relationship between Richard and Lester perfectly illustrates the bizarre dealings between their families. Although he did little work and spent three or four months a year in Florida, Richard did have expenses—sports cars, meals at Lutèce and the psychologists and tutors required by his sons, Jeffrey and Gregory. Richard was paid a \$50,000 "vice president's" salary by Schine Enterprises. He collected an additional monthly allowance not from his Schine trust but rather from two *Crown* trusts. These funds were insufficient, so Richard would borrow money from the Ambassador Hotel Corporation. He'd pay back the corporation, according to Lester's attorneys, by borrowing money from Lester. So if Lester's version is correct, here we have his first mistake: he lent lots of money to spendthrifts who had no obvious means of earning their way out of debt. What did Lester expect, that Richard would suddenly become a plastic surgeon?

Both Lester and David had to contend with powerful, successful fathers, but Richard's life might truly caution the sons of self-made men. "He was a very bright guy, but he just had no drive," says Byron Miller, one of Lester's lawyers. "After Myer died, it was hoped that Richard would come out from under Myer's dominating personality... He could never get himself to make a decision." Still, Richard seemed to lead an altogether pleasant life, far from the drafty Adirondacks roller rink or the offices of edgy bankers where his father had spent his days. Nevertheless, something drove Richard to overdose on sleeping pills in his

RICHARD SCHINE'S LIFE MIGHT CAUTION THE SONS OF SELF-MADE MEN

brother, Robert, was considered Henry's heir apparent and was given nine companies to run when he left the Navy after the war. Until Robert died suddenly in 1969, Lester was in the background even in his own family.

Ironically, it was just because David was Somebody and Lester Crown wasn't—because David was showing up in Winchell's column while Lester was worrying about lime adhesion—that Lester was given more and more control over David's fortunes by Myer Schine. Given the grasshopper-and-ant contrast between the two men, we should hardly be surprised that as his circumstances deteriorated, Myer began to rely more on his son-in-law than on the president of Schine Hotels. Lester had not only some busi-

the tycoon: LESTER CROWN AND HIS WIFE, RENEE (NÉE SCHINE)



the divorcée: PAT SCHINE,
LEFT—DID LESTER CAUSE
HER EX-HUSBAND'S SUICIDE?



the victor: COUSIN BARRY CROWN,
ABOVE, FORCED LESTER TO PAY.



the frogman: RENEE CROWN WITH
TWO DAUGHTERS AND FROGMAN, 1972



the fatality: DORIS SCHINE'S
ACCIDENT WAS NOT LESTER'S FAULT.

the deadbeat: DAVID SCHINE
WANTS LOTS OF
LESTER'S MILLIONS.



the patriarch: HENRY CROWN
WITH A NEW ACQUISITION

the other patriarch: MYER
AND HELEGARDE SCHINE



mother's Florida house in May 1988—two days after the anniversary of his father's death. According to Richard's ex-wife, Pat, Richard's mother overheard him having a violent argument with Lester on the phone that night.

Now Lester made his second mistake: he asked for his money back. Pat says Lester called the day after Richard's funeral "to tell me the boys [Jeffrey and Gregory] had nothing." According to Lester, Richard's interest in the Ambassador was worthless, because the hotel's debts would likely exceed its sale price. Lester said that Richard, Jeffrey and Gregory were deeply indebted to the Crown family. The total came to about \$12.5 million. Lester agreed to pay Jeffrey's \$100,000 bill at a mental clinic and to temporarily give him and Gregory monthly allowances, but he wanted them to sell to their grandmother Hildegard Schine, Myer's widow, the Adirondacks property that Richard had deeded over to them. They would then give Lester the proceeds to partially repay the debts. This land was just about all the property Richard had given his sons.

In May 1989, Gregory and Jeffrey sued Lester in federal court. They charged that although their father had signed promissory notes to Lester, the notes were part of Lester's "modus operandi of disguising all distributions or 'advances' as loans while he raped and pillaged Schine Enterprises." Richard's sons claimed that Lester had strapped Hildegard and all her children with "phantom 'debts' that were paid for out of the income... of Schine Enterprises that Lester Crown first appropriated for himself and then, in an apparent attempt to appear magnanimous, distributed in the form of 'loans'..." By even conservative estimates [Richard's] share of Schine Enterprises [was] far in excess of any 'loans.'" Was Lester raping and pillaging, or was he being generous? If he was being generous, then what kind of generosity is it to feed a family's delusional beliefs about its wealth? And if the Schines really were broke, if Schine Enterprises *had* long since run out of money, what made Lester think he was ever going to be paid back anyway? Lester's lawyers claim he had to make an effort to recover

his loans to the Schines so he could write them off as bad debts on his tax returns. If Lester's actions were purely technical, however, the Schines are certainly not taking them that way.

With one lawsuit already on his hands, Lester tried yet another approach to collecting the money he said the Schines owed him. The chief asset—and liability—of Schine Enterprises was the once-glamorous Ambassador Hotel. What had been Myer Schine's Rome had become his children's Addis Ababa. The Schines had been trying to sell the Ambassador since at least 1969, the year after Sirhan Sirhan shot Robert Kennedy in one of the hotel's kitchens. After 1982 it was losing more than \$1 million a year. Finally, an investor group headed by Donald Trump bought the hotel for \$64 million in 1989. The Schines were less than pleased when Lester told them that the sale price was not enough to cover the Ambassador's debt to various Crown lending entities of at least \$75-million. They claim that during the years the hotel was borrowing from the Crowns, Lester resisted selling or refurbishing it. And in addition to the Ambassador's debts and Richard's debts, the Crown lending entities claimed that Doris's family owed almost \$5 million. David allegedly owed more than \$1.2 million. Lester has written Hildegard to tell her she owes the Crowns several million dollars. Lester's lawyer Frank Rothman insists that "nobody is trying to take her money," but David accuses Lester of "terrorizing and bullying" Hildegard to the point that "she ordered [him] out of her apartment."

David's children and Doris's children sued Lester in Los Angeles Superior Court. Lester's lawyers assume that David Schine—who joined the suit later—instigated this. The suit, moved to federal court and consolidated with Gregory and Jeffrey's complaint, alleges that Lester created indebtedness "by self-dealing and for his own advantage [and] for the benefit of the Crown family." All told, it's claimed, Schine Enterprises' liquidated holdings fetched \$125 million. Seeking a true accounting and treble damages, the grandchildren finish up by charging that Lester violated the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization Act (RICO) through mail and wire fraud.

Rothman says that every year since 1964 the accountants Coopers & Lybrand had audited Schine Enterprises and given copies of their audit to the various families. Did Lester succeed in squeezing \$125 million from Myer's liquidated assets? "That's totally incorrect," says Rothman.

One argument the Schines make is compelling. How, they ask, could a man who juggles everything from cruise missiles to sports teams start out with a real estate company worth \$30 million in 1965, by Frank Rothman's pessimistic estimation, and end up with a company that is deep in debt? How could Lester miss out on a soaring real estate market?

"What they're omitting," says Lester's lawyer Byron Miller, "is that they would have shot him dead if he had tried to sell the Ambassador for less than \$100 million." In other words, the Schines wouldn't allow Lester to sell the hotel for all those years it was losing money and borrowing from the Crowns. But this explanation does not satisfy even Miller. True, the Crowns—partners in Tishman Speyer Properties—own buildings and ranch land in eight states. Yet, Miller says, "Lester is not a developer. It's not his field. If you want to say Lester Crown didn't successfully manage the liquidation, that is true. He's made other bad deals. So has every businessman." To defend his client's integrity, Miller finds he must insult his intelligence. (He is the second of Lester's attorneys to use the "stupid" defense.) The Schines may perhaps be forgiven for wondering why, given Lester's ability to manage huge investments in armaments, construction and real estate, one of Lester's failures was to lose all their money and put them deep in debt—to him.

Both sides are now in discovery. A trial date has been set for November. In December, Lester gave depositions for several days, and reportedly the Schines

feel that this went well for their side.

DESPITE HIS ECCENTRICITIES, DAVID SCHINE IS IN MANY WAYS A RECOGNIZABLE character—the would-be big shot, the guy with plans, *big plans*. He is the sort of person who *would* show off a briefcase full of cash in Harvard Yard. He's the sort of person who *would* put "Married Miss Universe 1955" on a current résumé. After *The French Connection* he managed some lounge singers and ran a music company. His only other movie, a *That's Entertainment!*-like melange of clips called *That's Action!*, sank in 1977 without a trace, except for the seemingly inevitable—and successful—lawsuit brought by the film's other investors against David. To put up a bond for an appeal in 1986, David borrowed \$300,000 from Lester, having "cried on Lester's doorstep," according to Frank Rothman. At the moment, David does control a little television-technology company called High Resolution Sciences. High Resolution's shares sell over the counter for less than a quarter. David has had to move the company twice for failure to pay rent. A title report from December 1989 showed judgments and liens of \$450,000 against his own home.

When SPY asked David if he wanted to discuss the case, he first agreed but then begged off. "I hesitate to get into that kind of game with [Lester's] lawyers," he said. "Let's face it, when you're in business or public life...you end up with a certain amount of controversies." Spoken like anyone with a long entry in *Who's Who*, except that David's business barely exists and his political role ended 35 years ago.

While more conventional than David, Lester Crown may be more complicated. His family's foundation has given away a fortune, and Lester has always tried to maintain an image of flawless integrity, but he sacrificed this reputation when, along with some other concrete manufacturers, he bribed Illinois lawmakers in 1972. Granted immunity, Lester admitted his role under oath. Others involved were convicted of felonies and sentenced to jail. In 1986 the Pentagon, of all institutions, attempted to take away Lester's high-level security clearance, calling him unfit because of the bribery incident. After a hearing at which such friends as Cyrus Vance and Al Haig and Hewlett-Packard founder David Packard testified on Lester's behalf, he was allowed to keep his clearance. He now lectures business students on ethics. Opinions of Lester's honor are hardly unanimous. Lazard Frères partner Felix Rohatyn says of his friend, "I would have him as the executor of my estate, as the guardian of my children, and running any business that I'm involved in." But a former business associate takes a contrary view: "I think the Crowns are dangerous people. Would Lester put someone out of business—pull their line of credit? No question. Would Lester drive someone into bankruptcy? He wouldn't think twice."

Lester still may not have shaken the impression that he was the second-stringer among the Crowns. Henry lived until just last August. It was not until his health began to fail that Lester was elected head of the General Dynamics executive committee. Failing-upward financier Pete Peterson says of Lester, "He's extremely bright. To say he's a man in his own right is an understatement." But others on Wall Street who follow General Dynamics are skeptical of Lester's ability. One analyst says, "He's really a mystery man at General Dynamics. It's not clear whether he is family baggage or holds his own."

The Schines are not the only relatives who have battled with Lester recently. Last year, after a lawsuit, Henry Crown and Company had to buy out the stake held by Lester's first cousins Barry and Florence. Barry Crown says, "Lester didn't steal. He just wasn't letting anybody have what was theirs. Lester takes everybody's money and controls it." It might hurt that the best a blood relative can say about you is that you "didn't steal," but compared with what the Schines have been saying, this should give Lester comfort.

Lester's lawyers claim to be baffled by his behavior toward the Schines. "For years," Byron Miller says, "I'd been disagreeing with it and getting nowhere." Frank Rothman comments, "I would have said to Lester, 'Stop buying them houses, stop paying for their mortgages, stop being their backup banker.'" Renee Crown also seems at a loss to explain her husband's actions. "I'm not a prophet," she told SPY. "I couldn't tell you what his motivations are." Lester did not wish to explain himself. Called at his home outside Chicago, he said angrily, "You're getting into a personal area. *Don't do that.*"

Lester Crown once told a reporter that he hoped he'd transmitted to his children an abhorrence of "opulence and grandiose things." Though Lester and Renee do have his-and-hers jets, they live in a handsome

LESTER CROWN ADMITTED TO BRIBING ILLINOIS LAWMAKERS

but unimposing two-story redbrick Georgian house. According to Renee, the family recently fired all of its servants, because "we enjoy the privacy." To get more work done, Lester has said, he does have a chauffeur, but Lester insists on riding up front, in a midsize car. The grandson of a thrifty match salesman is himself a thrifty billionaire.

An abhorrence of opulence and grandiose things is not a quality that one would ascribe to G. David Schine. Unfortunately, he can no longer afford them. From Lithuania to riches and fame and then to suicide and litigious obscurity, the Schine family's fortunes have traveled in a saddening arc. A rags-to-riches story is not supposed to work out this way. Still, David at least has his memories—Ciro's, the Stork Club, *Mocambo*. ▀

An Exclusive, Almost Unbearably Mean SPY Prank

That Shows That in Televisionland, the Biggest

Dreamers Are

the Executives

“Well, why couldn't De Niro appear on *D*

OVER THE YEARS, THE EXECUTIVES WHO PRODUCE NETWORK TELEVISION SERIES have shown an obsessive willingness to test the credulity of the viewing public. Talking horses. Talking cars. Genies. Martians. Castaways. Rich hillbillies. Domesticated witches. Flying nuns. Bionic men. Identical cousins. Wheelchair-bound detectives. Astronauts lost in the Stone Age. Mischievous POWs and goofy Nazis. A teenage physician. From such ideas, fortunes have been made.

Figuring that turnabout is fair play, we thought we'd test the credulity of a few television executives. We decided to see how some producers would react if the world's most highly regarded actors expressed interest in appearing on their current television shows. So we invented Jack Fine, an old-time personal manager — effete but cigar-chomping, front booth at The Russian Tea Room — equipped him with a dream client list, an actual desk, a phone and an assistant (David Feld), and asked him to place some of his supposed clients on some of America's best-known television series. Here are the results.



Tuesday 8:00 p.m.

WHO'S THE BOSS? (CC)

Is Tony's (Tony Danza) job in jeopardy? He sees green when Victoria (Vanessa Redgrave), Angela's former British governess, appears on the scene. Sit back and watch the sparks fly between the zany nanny and the macho manservant.

oogie Howser?"



IN LATE NOVEMBER, JACK FINE OF APEX MANAGEMENT, ACTING AS VANESSA REDGRAVE'S PERSONAL MANAGER, CALLED BLAKE HUNTER AND MARTIN COHAN, PRODUCERS OF THE ABC COMEDY SERIES *WHO'S THE BOSS?*, WHICH STARS TONY DANZA, ASKING WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INTEREST IN CASTING REDGRAVE IN AN EPISODE OF THE PROGRAM.

FINE: Hello. My name is Jack Fine —

HUNTER: Right!

FINE: —and I have a small client list. One of my clients is Vanessa Redgrave.

HUNTER: Right...

FINE: Now, um, she has seen the show, and she would *lo-o-o-ove*—*she adores the show, she loves it*—is it possible sometime to get her a guest spot on the show?

HUNTER: Well, I'm astonished that Vanessa Redgrave is interested in our show!

FINE: Well, you shouldn't be.

HUNTER: Uh, we don't have anything, you know...

FINE: Not something tomorrow, or anything like that...

HUNTER: Yeah....Let me get my partner on the phone, because I'd like him to hear this. You mind?

FINE: That would be Mr. Cohan?

HUNTER: Yeah.

[Cohan was summoned.]

HUNTER: We're always flattered if anyone watches our show. I guess there are millions of people who do, but when someone calls, we feel very happy. And particularly someone like this! [Laughs] Okay, Marty's hopping on here.

COHAN: Hello?

FINE: Mr. Cohan.

COHAN: Hi, how are you, Jack?

FINE: Um, I think Mr. Hunter is still in a state of shock, but there is no reason to be at all.

COHAN: Does she watch the show?

FINE: She has. We send tapes to her.

COHAN: How interesting.

FINE: There are other shows, but this is her favorite.

COHAN: Oh, God, that's very flattering. You send tapes to her?

FINE: Yes. Not me personally.

COHAN: Uh-huh.

FINE: This obviously isn't something that can be planned next week, but somewhere down the line...

COHAN: Oh, yeah, this requires some thought.

HUNTER: Did she or did you have any thought on how she might fit in with our format or our family or our situation, or is that just all—

FINE: We did talk about that. But she doesn't want to become a producer or a writer. That would be

basically up to you people.

COHAN: But if there was a thought, we're certainly open to hearing it.

FINE: Something like a neighbor or a relative, you know, something like that.

HUNTER: Okay, then let us give it some thought. This is, this is—

COHAN: —real interesting!

HUNTER: Very, *very* interesting.

FINE: Actually, I remember now, she mentioned there was a show. I believe there was a housekeeper on *Maude*, a British housekeeper.

HUNTER: Yes. Was that Hermione Baddeley?

FINE: Yes. Yes, it was. Something maybe

like that, or—you know. Like I said, we don't want to become overseers or anything like that. It's up to you. Let me give you my number.

HUNTER: Okay, then let us put our thoughts together here.

[Later, David Feld of Apex Management called the producers to inform them that he had recently learned that a messenger in his office named Jack Fine was representing himself as an agent for Vanessa Redgrave. Cohan accepted the explanation and said no harm was done, noting, "We just—Jack Fine sounds like an agent in this town. That's maybe what threw us. There's some Fine here in town, and I can't remember if it's Jack or not."]

SECRETARY: How interesting!

FINE: Would Mr. Hargrove be interested, do you know?

SECRETARY: Well, I will be sure to ask him.

[Before long, Fine reached Hargrove.]

HARGROVE: How are you doing?

FINE: Okay. Your secretary is in a little state of disbelief. . . .

HARGROVE: She is? Well, I'll speak to her about that.

FINE: No, it's quite all right; I understand.

HARGROVE: Yeah. Well, listen, we're very interested in your call about Sting. Could you tell me a little more about it?

FINE: Well, there's really not that much to say except that he adores the show.


HARGROVE: Well, we'd certainly love to have him do an episode. How could we go about that?

FINE: Well, I just wanted to first establish this contact right here. How many shows do you have in the can? Are they all in the can for this season?

HARGROVE: Oh, no, no, no. We're still shooting. We have another eight to shoot.

FINE: Do you know if there's anything that's . . . you know, *right* for him?

HARGROVE: Well, if there isn't, we would

IN LATE NOVEMBER, FINE, ACTING  AS THE PERSONAL MANAGER OF STING, THE BRITISH ROCK STAR AND ACTOR, PLACED A CALL TO DEAN HARGROVE, AN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF THE ABC SERIES *THE FATHER DOWLING MYSTERIES*, A SHOW ABOUT A CRIME-SOLVING PRIEST, WHICH STARS TOM BOSLEY.

FINE: Yes, my name is Jack Fine. I'm the personal manager of several people, one of whom is Sting, the rock star and the actor. He's very much interested in perhaps getting a spot—a guest spot—on the show.

SECRETARY: On which show?

FINE: *Father Dowling*.

SECRETARY: Sting is?

FINE: Excuse me?

SECRETARY: Who is interested?

FINE: Sting.

SECRETARY: Sting is?

FINE: Yes.

SECRETARY: *Sting* is interested in getting a guest spot on *Father Dowling*?

FINE: Yes, he is.

Thursday 8:00 p.m.
**FATHER DOWLING
MYSTERIES (CC); 60 min.**

A British rock star, Clive McHoolihan (Sting), turns supersleuth when he teams up with Father Dowling (Tom Bosley) to track down the mob-connected record promoter who kidnaps Sister Steve (Tracy Nelson).



seriously consider writing something for him if he really wanted to do the show. What I'd like to do, if it's all right with you, is to put some kind of an if-come deal in place, on a financial level, so this doesn't all fall apart. We're a humble television show.

FINE: Oh, I understand.

HARGROVE: And, uh, then, subject to his approving the script, um, we'd be able to put him in a show.

FINE: Okay, see, I'm not his agent—I'm his personal manager.

HARGROVE: Uh-huh. So who should we talk to about that?

FINE: Why don't I call you back? Let me get back to him.

[A few days later, Hargrove called Fine.]

HARGROVE: Apropos the conversation we had the other day, we're obviously, uh, you know, very interested and excited about the possibility of Sting appearing on the show.

FINE: Right...

HARGROVE: I was wondering if there was any way that I could advance this notion at all.

FINE: In terms of...?

HARGROVE: Well, what I was thinking is something that I mentioned last time. We'd like to...develop, uh, you know, a big star part that would feature he and Father Dowling.

FINE: Now, would there be music in-

involved? Because I don't think that that's something that—

HARGROVE: No, it wouldn't be that at all. It's strictly an acting part.


FINE: That's good.

HARGROVE: Yeah, because, uh, I presumed that it wasn't his interest. What I'd like to do, you know, in order for us to sit down and develop a show with this in mind...if it would be possible for us to put a deal in place subject to his approval of the script, so that he's not committed to do it until he reads it. But that way we know that we can afford him and all those kinds of things.

FINE: Hmmm. All right. Let me call...um—don't do anything until I call back on Tuesday, and then I'll be able to tell you exactly what's happening. But I did talk to him after we spoke, and he still is very much interested in it.

HARGROVE: Well, we're obviously very excited about it.

[On December 18, SPY called Sting's publicist and asked for a comment on a rumor we'd heard that Sting was up for a part on The Father Dowling Mysteries. "It's definitely not true," she said firmly. "He didn't do the show, he wasn't offered the show, he's not going to do the show." Later that day David Feld of Apex Management, acting as Jack Fine's assistant, called Hargrove and informed him that Sting was not available for an appearance.]

IN EARLY DECEMBER, FINE CALLED  BOB BOYETT, ONE OF THE PRODUCERS OF THE ABC COMEDY SERIES *FULL HOUSE*, A SHOW ABOUT MEN WITH CHILDREN BUT WITHOUT WOMEN, WHICH STARS BOB SAGET. FINE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INTEREST IN CASTING MARLON BRANDO IN A ROLE IN THE SERIES.

FINE: Did your secretary tell you why I'm calling?

BOYETT: Yes. And what exactly is your relationship to Mr. Brando?

FINE: I am a personal manager.

BOYETT: Right.

FINE: I've known the man for much longer than I care to mention. He's a good friend of mine. And, quite simply put, he loves your show, adores it.

BOYETT: Well, what is the—I mean, I guess my question is, what—are you calling on his behalf?

FINE: I am. I'm not trying to initiate something here. I don't deal with numbers. I'm just a personal manager. This covers everything from plane tickets to making sure that his collars get the right amount of starch in them.

BOYETT: Right.

FINE: And I'm just trying to initiate contact here.

BOYETT: Right, right.

FINE: Are you interested at all?

BOYETT: Uh, yeah, we would certainly be interested. Is he in California?

FINE: Right now he's not, but I'd really not like to say anything more. I'm sure you can understand that.

BOYETT: Right, right. When do you think he would be interested in doing this, if it were like a guest appearance or something? Because we're shooting three shows in January and four shows in February.

FINE: February would sound good. Do you have material that would be suitable?

BOYETT: Well, when we got your call, the only thing we thought of—we are shooting a show which is going to be a really major show and very promotable, where, if you're familiar with the show, the characters Jesse and Rebecca get married.

FINE: I'm not familiar with the show.

BOYETT: It's a major two-parter, and a wedding, and you know, we thought when we first got the call maybe there could be an interesting part if he wanted to perform the marriage ceremony.

FINE: He mentioned to me—um, are you familiar with the Bill Demarest role in...what was the Fred MacMurray show?

BOYETT: Oh, *My Three Sons*.

FINE: Yes, sort of like a curmudgeon uncle, something like that. Now, is that something that fits into this?

BOYETT: Would he be interested in maybe recurring in the role?

FINE: He mentioned that. Now, all of this is very tentative. It's an idea, it's a notion, it's in the formative stages. Is there something like that that's possible?

BOYETT: Well, we could certainly fit that into our—I think what we would have to do at some point is sit in a room with him and talk.

FINE: One thing he's very worried about, and that is disrupting the chemistry, the chemistry between the cast that's already there. Do you think that would be a problem?

BOYETT: Well, I don't think so. I mean, in what way is he concerned?

FINE: Well, um, just when a new person arrives, and there might be excess publicity, causing a big hubbub, something like that, and the people who are already there tend to resent it.

BOYETT: Right. Well, in this case, this is the kind of show where there are a lot of people in the show, and they're all pretty

Friday 8:00 p.m.
FULL HOUSE (CC)

Will Jesse (John Stamos) and Rebecca (Lori Loughlin) tackle the task of tying the knot? Things are less than ripe for romance when eccentric Uncle Merle (Marlon Brando) threatens to throw a monkey wrench into the plans. Part 1.



well established, and I think that—I mean, these people have been conditioned to, first of all, coming into a series, where they were all in their own right established to some degree, and yet, you know, for quite a long while the star of the show happened to be a one-year-old baby, or a two-year-old baby.

FINE: I'm sure you can understand the concern, though.

BOYETT: Yeah, absolutely....The other problem on the show, which I have to be honest with you about, there are a lot of people to service. It's a big cast. [Brando's role] would probably be very limited if there were something available.

FINE: Is it sort of like the show *thirtysomething*, where, perhaps, certain characters do not appear?

BOYETT: No, no, basically everybody appears every week. But if it was—in his case I would suggest if this was something you were gonna do, he wouldn't necessarily want to appear every week, but again, we'd have to talk to him. I mean, there's two sides of that: on the

one hand, if you appear often, there's a certain continuity. On the other hand it's, uh, y'know, you don't.

FINE: I completely understand.

BOYETT: We all admire him and his work and, uh, and all of that, and there's no doubt that he would be—it would be a very interesting thing to do, and I'm sure it would be something that once we sat and talked and agreed on a character, we would try to do a character that he would have fun doing—or that he would feel has enough *integrity* that he would like to do it. But it's something we would have to talk about, and at some point we'd have to bring it up with the network.

[Later, Fine again phoned the producers, to inform them that Brando would be unavailable. Then, on December 18, SPY phoned Brando's business-management agency, asking for a comment on a rumor that Brando was considering taking a role in Full House. The spokesperson said, "I haven't heard that, but, I mean, we would have no way of knowing if he has made those arrangements."]

ing a guest shot—

SECRETARY: Am I nuts, or did you just say William Hurt?

FINE: Yes, I did.

SECRETARY: That's just so funny. She'll be thrilled to hear that.

FINE: I hope she will be. And Mr. Hurt will be.

SECRETARY: I will have her call you.

[The next day, Fine got through to Rickey.]

FINE: Uh, I do not represent William Hurt; I'm his personal manager, and he's in love with your show.

RICKEY: *[Gleefully]* Oh, marvelous! Our show's in love with him!

FINE: *[Laughs]* I guess that's why he likes it so much. Um, do you know if your scripts are out right now? Are they all in the can?

RICKEY: No. We are going to be shooting four more scripts, and probably more after that.

FINE: That's good.

RICKEY: If he is interested in doing anything on the show, I would transfer you to Jeff Stein, our executive producer, and let you talk to him. If you'll just hold a se—are you in your office in case I lose you? Our phone system was *[laughs]*—

FINE: I have the same phone system.

RICKEY: *[Laughing]* Everybody does these days.

[She transferred the call.]

STEIN: Jeff Stein.

FINE: Jeff Stein?

STEIN: Ah, Jack Fine *[laughs]*.

FINE: Our names rhyme.

STEIN: Jack, how're you doing?

IN EARLY DECEMBER, FINE CONTACTED PAT RICKEY, WHO WAS THEN A PRODUCER OF THE FOX COMEDY SERIES *BABES*, A PROGRAM ABOUT HEAVY WOMEN, ASKING WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INTEREST IN CASTING WILLIAM HURT IN A PART IN THE SERIES. FINE FIRST SPOKE TO A SECRETARY.

FINE: I am Bill Hurt's—William Hurt's personal manager, and he loves the

show, adores it, absolutely adores it, and is very much interested in perhaps do-

FINE: Did Pat tell you why I'm calling?
STEIN: Well, that Mr. Hurt is interested in doing the show. Do I hear correctly?
FINE: Yes. Yes, you do... He likes your show. Now, I'm not familiar with the show—I hope you don't find that insulting....

STEIN: [*Laughing*] No! Not—not at all!
FINE: Is this something that you'd be interested in?

STEIN: Well, I mean, *sure*. If Bill wants to do the show, we'd love to have him.

FINE: Uh-huh. Now, Pat Rickey says there are three scripts that haven't been filmed, I believe? And then you're going to be renewed, or...?

STEIN: We've been picked up. It's the short-order mania going around in town these days—you know, no one gets a [network order for a] full back nine [episodes] anymore. We had an original order of 13, and we just got picked up for 4 more.

FINE: Then congratulations are in order.
STEIN: Is Bill interested in doing a little thing or a thing where he'd, like, be in the whole show?

FINE: He said to me that he would either be interested in one guest shot or perhaps a running continuous role.

STEIN: [*Pause*] Okay. Well, uh [*laughs*] I'm a little...

FINE: [*Reassuringly*] It's not like—it's not *Marlon Brando* we're talking about.

STEIN: Okay, well, I mean, we were just thinking of, just right now, just thinking of one...

FINE: Would you tell me about the show? I know that there are three women. Are they sisters? Are they roommates?

STEIN: They're three large women.

FINE: But they're not relatives, so he couldn't be a father or an uncle or anything like that.

STEIN: No, uh, hold on one second.

FINE: Sure.

[*Long pause, then a new person came on the line.*]

NEW VOICE: Mr. Fine, I'm sorry, this is Teri Tunder. I'm the casting director, and I just sort of walked in on this conversation. Um, are we talking about the William Hurt from *Altered States*?

FINE: Yes, we are, but that was quite some time ago.

TUNDER: I know that was quite some time ago.

FINE: There was also Blair Brown from *Altered States*.

TUNDER: Right! Um, okay. And he—*all right!* Well, could you hold on one second?

[*Pause.*]

STEIN: Hello?

FINE: This is Mr. Stein?

STEIN: Yeah, you're back with me. I just needed to clarify this. I was just—I thought maybe we were talking about somebody different. I mean, uh...

FINE: I know. He often gets confused with John Hurt. And there's a John Heard. But this is the real McCoy.

STEIN: Okay. Well, um, listen. I mean...

FINE: We don't want to now dictate any sort of story ideas. Far be it from me—I can't even write a memo. But just putting the idea in your head...

STEIN: No, I mean, I'm just saying we would be thrilled to have Bill, and we would just like to think in terms of—we have, like, an episode that would probably be right up his alley. It would be an entire-episode kind of thing, versus a walk-on...

FINE: Is there a character that could then come back, perhaps in further episodes?

STEIN: Uh...

FINE: He doesn't get wiped out by a car crash or anything?



STEIN: Oh, no, no, no, no. I mean, my question is, *Bill wants to do a TV show?*

FINE: Yes, he does.

STEIN: He's looking for a...?

FINE: A running role. A continuous role. Could you describe the character in this one episode?

STEIN: The character in this episode, in a nutshell, is—the girls decide to—that

they're gonna—it's like a Pygmalion story. The girls decide that rather than give the money to charity or whatever, they're going to find one homeless person—

FINE: That sounds perfect!

STEIN: —one homeless person and change his life around. You haven't seen the show, so you don't really... it's probably why Bill likes it—it's kind of *bent*, right? What it is, is they find this guy who's been drinking Sterno for the past 20 years, right? They clean him up—you know, they take him off the street, they get him a job. And then, you know—and now they've saved this one homeless person, right? And then this guy—that would be Bill—goes out and proceeds to become the head of the company, starts acquiring other companies, starts closing down factories and putting thousands and thousands of people out of work and making them homeless and bums. And then, you know, the girls have done their job too well, and they have to stop him.

FINE: All this in one half hour?

STEIN: Oh, yeah.

FINE: Wow!

STEIN: That's the nature of sitcoms. You go very far very fast.

FINE: Uh-huh. Why don't I call him now,

Thursday 8:30 p.m.

BABES (CC)

William Hurt makes a guest appearance as a homeless man with whom the hefty harem attempt to play Pygmalion. But their wacky plot backfires, and Charlene (Wendie Jo Sperber) gets in over her head.

and I'll probably be able to get back to you sometime next week. I'll tell him what you just told me.

STEIN: I mean, that was just an idea of a story we just cleared that we thought, you know, for somebody like Bill, who's a terrific-looking guy, that, you know, it would be a surprise to see him in a sitcom, right? To kind of dirty him up and

then clean him up and then, you know—that would be a good role for him. [SPY later called Hurt's agent, asking for a comment on the rumor that the actor was going to appear on an episode of *Babes*. "Negative, negative, negative," the agent replied. Soon after, David Feld called Jordan Moffet, who is one of the show's executive producers, and told him that Fine had emotional problems and had no authorization to speak on William Hurt's behalf. Part of their conversation follows.]

FELD: This is sort of crazy, and we're very embarrassed for the company. There's no William Hurt in your show. I apologize very deeply. I hope it didn't inconvenience you too greatly.

MOFFET: Well, it, uh, no, it just got the ball rolling. I mean, it got the network

and the studio all excited. Obviously, it would be a big coup if he did it [laughs]. So...the truth of the matter is that Bill Hurt never saw the show? I mean, did [the idea] come from somewhere?

FELD: Jack's brain, I'm afraid....

MOFFET: Okay, I'm confused now. Does Mr. Fine still represent Mr. Hurt?

FELD: No, he never has....

MOFFET: Okay, just so I can give—because people are going to ask me what happened: Jack Fine does not have anything to do with Bill Hurt.

FELD: No....

MOFFET: Okay, so...he has nothing to do with William Hurt at all?

FELD: Exactly....

MOFFET: Okay. Well, thank you very much for calling.

Holden was William Holden. That's hopefully not going to happen, uh, here.

TOPPING: Okay, so she wants to play a character, not herself. Does she want a big part or a cameo?

FINE: Whatever is the normal, you know—not for just one scene.

TOPPING: Okay, not one scene, but through the whole thing.

FINE: Such as a neighbor, or a waitress.... You know, whatever.

TOPPING: A waitress...neighbor...okay. Okay. What we'll probably do is...hang on one second [muffled voices in background]. They're trying to—they'll start thinking and try to come up with something really worthwhile, and what they'll do is they'll write it and send you a script. Does that sound good?

FINE: Okay.

TOPPING: They're...they're brilliant. [Laughs] They're very funny, so the fact that she wants to be in it—they're very pleased, as far as they will definitely find something, and what they'll do is, they'll come up with something special, and we'll send you a script, and she can read it and see if she likes it.

[On December 17 the producers received a call from David Feld informing them that Ms. Streep had, for the moment, changed her mind.]

NEXT, FINE CALLED GABRIELLE TOPPING, A PRODUCER OF THE FOX COMEDY SERIES *MARRIED...WITH CHILDREN*, A PROGRAM ABOUT A LOUISH FAMILY, AND ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY INTEREST IN CASTING MERYL STREEP IN THE SERIES. PART OF THEIR CONVERSATION FOLLOWS.

FINE: All the conversations that she and I have had have been very rudimentary, and, uh, there's not that much planned. One thing, though, that I did glean from the conversations was that she did not want to appear as herself.


TOPPING: Okay, she wants to be a character.

FINE: Yes, I know that you perhaps remember *Lucille Ball* episodes where Bob Hope was Bob Hope or William

Sunday 9:00 p.m.
MARRIED...WITH
CHILDREN (CC)

Meryl Streep guest-stars as Ginny, Marcy's (Amanda Bearse) visiting college chum who overstays her welcome. High jinks result when Marcy's husband, Jefferson (Ted McGinley), enlists the Bundy bunch to help drive away the thing that wouldn't leave.



IN MID-DECEMBER, FINE PHONED  RICK BERMAN, AN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF THE SYNDICATED SERIES *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, AND ASKED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY INTEREST IN ALLOWING THE DISTINGUISHED JAPANESE FILMMAKER AKIRA KUROSAWA TO DIRECT AN EPISODE.

FINE: First of all, I'm not an agent. I'm a personal manager. I'm not going to sit here and tell you that Mr. Kurosawa and I are great friends, because I think I've met the man three times—the last time was over a dozen years ago. When he does come to New York, on those rare occasions, I'm just the one that makes sure everything is hunky-dory for him.

BERMAN: Right....

FINE: And, um, he's using me—although maybe *using* isn't the right word, but—to establish contact. And the other thing is that—and I don't mean to be insulting or denigrating—I personally don't watch the show.

BERMAN: Oh, that's okay. A lot of people don't watch the show.

FINE: [Laughs] I don't think my TV's been on since *Playhouse 90* went off the air, actually. Now, uh, I read to [your assistant] the fax that was sent. Would you like to hear that?

BERMAN: Very much so.

FINE: Okay. "Have recently had opportunity to see *Star Trek: Next Generation*. Please send other episodes in series. Am interested to perhaps direct episode—contact producers. Much of show reminiscent of our own drama *Nob*"—*N-O-H*—"and is very fertile. Mention possible *Rashomon* theme." And that's that.

BERMAN: Mention possible *Rashomon* what?

FINE: Theme. *T-H-E-M-E*.

BERMAN: Theme.

FINE: And, uh, we got another fax, and he's still very interested. It says, "Autumn. Autumn is good timing," is what it says.

BERMAN: Well, this is very fascinating to us, obviously. I mean it's not...it's not, uh...it's not every day that—that some directors of that scope are interested in directing television shows.

FINE: Right. I wonder if somehow he perhaps got wind of David Lynch and *Twin Peaks*, I don't know. But, uh, you should be definitely flattered.

BERMAN: Oh, well, we...yes. We are. We are extremely flattered. Uh, I wonder how he became...I wonder how he, uh—

FINE: See, I know he was in America early this year. Perhaps he got a chance



to see it at that time.

BERMAN: It is quite fascinating. It is quite fascinating...I think it was the *L.A. Times* about the fact that Steven Spielberg and George Lucas had shown some interest in directing episodes of *Twin Peaks*. So it's, uh, it's in the same vein, but I just—I must—I must say that this is even a more—to me—a more impressive thing. It all—it all fits into the same—well, I mean, obviously this is something that—that we would be more than fascinated in pursuing.

FINE: Do you have any ideas now? Something that I could, uh, fax him? Just something to throw out?

BERMAN: Well, uh—we start production in the beginning of July and run through the end of April. So if, if he would be interested in—I guess the thing that I would think would be best would be to tell [him] that we are honored and flattered, that we would be delighted to dis-

cuss his involvement in any way in doing an episode....

FINE: Your phrasing was "honored and flattered"?

BERMAN: Yes. We would be honored and flattered....

FINE: Okay. I'll—it just so happens I'm retiring at the end of this year, and you'll probably be hearing from David Feld in my office, *F-E-L-D*.

BERMAN: David Feld. I hope your retirement is a happy one.

FINE: I hope so, too.

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BERMAN: Um, all right now, and...what is the name of your company, sir?

FINE: Apex. But we never actually use the name.

BERMAN: Oh, you don't.

FINE: It's Jack Fine.

BERMAN: It's Jack Fine. All right, and David Feld is in your office.

FINE: Yes, he is.

BERMAN: And you are both attorneys?

FINE: We are not attorneys. Basically we are gofers.

BERMAN: You are both gofers?

FINE: Yes, we've been gofers for a long time, but *personal managers* is the distinguished registration.

BERMAN: Right. I know that. And I do appreciate this. It's fascinating. Thank you.

[On January 3, Jack Fine's fictitious daughter, Estelle Fine-Feld, phoned a producer of *Star Trek* and informed him that Mr. Kurosawa had changed his mind.] ▶

FEELIN' GOOFY

*Critics go back in time, down south
and into the casting director's chair*

BY HUMPHREY GREDDON

REVIEW
OF
REVIEWERS

The sixties are alive and well at *New York* magazine, of all places—I always thought that only the *seventies* were alive there. Unreconstructed members of the Movement lurk in the review section. John Leonard, the older Weavers fan and coffeehouse rebel whom the kids have adopted as a kind of mascot, was a Bolshie scold when reviewing the recent broadcast of the Bertie-and-Jeeves stories on *Masterpiece Theatre*. Bertie is a “social parasite,” the magazine’s television critic complained, and P. G. Wodehouse “sat out both world wars and most of the twentieth century, turning out, in his own words, ‘musical comedies without music.’” Furthermore, according to Leonard, Wodehouse wrote in “the High English style of playing hooky from any serious literary purpose or sinister historical intention.”

Well, yes, isn’t that a bit the point? You wonder if Leonard has ever read the musical comedies without music of Fyodor Dostoyevski—they’re a little grim. Leonard ends the review witheringly. “‘Work?’” he quotes Bertie. “‘Honest toil? Hewing the wood?’ Perish the thought, and wish away class struggle. Ha!” Class struggle? You don’t often find such radicalism in the pages of *New York* magazine, but perhaps we haven’t really been trying.

And sure enough, in that same issue, art critic Kay Larson suggested that with the Museum of Modern Art’s “High & Low” show, “the post-Vietnam generations...[were] once again disenfranchised.” There go those post-Vietnam generations getting oppressed again—in the past by the requirement to “Tone down that stereo!” and this time by a bad museum exhibit.

The person at *New York* who best represents the youthquake, though, is

David Denby. Denby is *New York*’s movie critic, but he most recently chose to wear long hair and smoke grass in the pages of the quaintly antiestablishment *New York Review of Books*. In the course of a very long essay on the very long documentary films of Frederick Wiseman, Denby provides this gloss on Wiseman’s first feature, a cinema verité portrait of a typical Philadelphia high school in 1968: “Everywhere in the school, in the classrooms and administrative offices and in the long hallways, we have seen the omnipresent teachers and school officials, frightened and rule-bound, trying to turn out teenagers who will submit to authority.” Later, Denby elaborates:

Many of the teachers and administrators are exercising a bland and frightened dictatorship; their speech is deadened as if any sign of life might inspire the students to break out of control.

Meanwhile, dulled and demoralized by the teachers’ inability to bring any subject to life, many of the best students are gathered in a class of malcontents where they sit in resentful torpor—they are also the victims of the hypocrisy and authoritarianism promoted in the school.

Teachers and administrators! Deadness!



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN GUARNACCIA

Hypocrisy! Authority! Dictatorship! Well, *something is happening, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mr. Jones?* Does Denby still believe that high schools in the sixties were dictatorships? Is he still shocked that teachers are "unable to bring subjects to life"? Does he still think that those incredibly cool malcontents, soon to be freaks and heads, were victims? The film is an artifact of 1968. Apparently Denby is, too.

(Shortly before this column went to press, Denby, who has been discussed in this space a dozen times previously, interpolated a passage attacking SPY into one of his movie reviews. Among other things, he called SPY a "thug operation," and given the magazine's disagreeable attitude about certain perfectly legitimate expenses, I would have to agree! I should point out, though, that the comments about Denby above were written some weeks before his criticism appeared.)

High school is an experience that the spindly aesthetes at *The New Yorker* would probably prefer to forget. Whoever wrote the recent Talk of the Town piece about those sixties artifacts the Grateful Dead must, at least, have no memory of his high school yearbook. After quoting Keats, ruminating on the band's history and describing a recent performance in London, the writer ended with this startlingly apt line from a Grateful Dead song: "What a long, strange trip it's been." The many, many seniors who use this for their yearbook quote usually regret it by the end of the summer. Oh, well, this writer at least has company — Brendan Gill, with generational appropriateness, recently quoted Robert Frost to this effect: "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood and I—I took the one less traveled by." That's Robert Frost, the poet.

Has *Esquire* relocated its editorial offices to Mississippi? In the November issue alone, one writer used the word *nekkid*, and a page later another (the novelist John Edgar Wideman, profiling Michael Jordan) used the word *spozed*. Has *everybody* relocated? — in a long article about a new compact-disc compilation of music by Delta blues singer Robert Johnson, *Newsweek* remarked, "Someone must have their mojo workin' over at Columbia

Records." Actually, it was probably inevitable that a story in *Newsweek* about the blues would use the phrase "mojo workin'" — and also the phrases "have mercy" and "upped and died" and "one mo' time," which have nothing to do with the blues but do have *something* to do with black people. What, though, can the last sentence — "And as usual, the man is telling the absolute truth, squared" — possibly mean? I guess *Newsweek* must dig Robert Johnson the most.

Elsewhere in its arts pages, *Newsweek* has introduced a new hyphenated occupation: the book reviewer-casting agent. Larry Reibstein cast the movie of a book about the fall of E. F. Hutton: "How about Jack Nicholson portraying the maniacal Robert M. Fomon character...?" and so on. In the very next review in the same issue, Peter S. Prescott cast the lead for *Jurassic Park*, by Michael Crichton: "Of course, the whole place goes haywire and only a professor of paleontology who acts like Harrison Ford can avert total disaster." Why not Meryl Streep writing the Bible in *The Book of J*, or Dean Stockwell in *Rabbit at Rest*, or Tim Robbins playing George Will in *Men at Work*? When even the people paid to care about them think of books as merely movies-in-waiting, you know that books are doomed.

In *The Village Voice*, where the eighties are alive and well, Elizabeth Hess reviewed a show by the artist Susan Silas. A "handsome diptych" by Silas included a signboard with a limerick. "There once was a man from Bombay," it began, and it went on to describe how this man from Bombay molded some clay and attempted to satisfy himself sexually with the result. Hess elucidated, "'There once was a man from...' is a generic lead into a structural form of racism, where people from 'other' cultures are the butts of 'our' jokes." If word of this gets out, it will be a long, hot summer in Nantucket.

Here is Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, the daily book reviewer for *The New York Times* who sits and reads all day long, writing about Ronald Reagan's autobiography:

What is most striking of all is the sense of authenticity that "An American Life"

conveys. Somehow, the impression has grown up that the public Ronald Reagan was an amalgam of images....

What "An American Life" conveys is that Ronald Reagan was both a consummate actor and a man of considerable substance. It was not with mirrors [that] he left office the most popular President of modern times.

Here is Maureen Dowd, the *Times* reporter who covered the White House in the Reagan years and continues to do so and who talks to presidential aides all day long, writing about Ronald Reagan's autobiography in the *Times* Book Review:

Mr. Reagan was a master illusionist.... This book tries to piece back together that illusion, to bring back the colored lights and the warm enchantment. But maybe the moral of the story is that we all outgrow magicians.

No, Mr. Lehmann-Haupt, the pretty lady is not *really* sawed in two.

Readers will remember some remarks here two issues ago regarding Richard Bernstein of *The New York Times* — the thinking man's Mel Gussow. It was noted that in the article under discussion, Bernstein quoted the theater critic Robert Brustein at length. Brustein, then, would quite naturally hold the opinion of Bernstein's work that he expressed some weeks later in *The New Republic* — Bernstein, Brustein said, "has been writing very intelligently on culture in *The New York Times*." Very, very intelligently.

The Arts-Catch-Up-With-a-Society-in-Disarray Alert: Michiko Kakutani reviewed Salman Rushdie's new book in the daily *New York Times*. The book is similar to Rushdie's other works, she said, for "as in those books, the fantastical devices of magical realism... are summoned to give the reader a heightened, metaphoric picture of a world gone mad. As in those books, improbable characters and melodramatic events proliferate to underscore the absurdities of recent history." Maybe the center cannot hold and that damn falcon is still wandering around somewhere, but one thing is fixed and certain — the idea that the world has gone mad and that history is absurd will, as it has for decades, always impress people who write book reviews. ☺

THE MYSTERY OF THE BOUNTY

*When it comes to the "collapsing
Soviet economy," the U.S. press
separates the wheat from the chaff
and prints the chaff*

BY EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN



What happens in the brave new media world when a major event doesn't fit in with its picture of reality—when that event essentially disproves the conventional picture of reality? Is the picture changed, or is the event dropped down the memory hole? Consider the case of last year's Soviet grain harvest.

The apparent collapse of Soviet agriculture was an ongoing story in the press last summer. There were depictions of unmotivated peasants, lacking the incentive of private ownership; unplowed fields; food stores with row upon row of empty shelves; panicked and angry consumers.

Oddly, in the midst of this "famished economy," as *The New York Times* named it, Soviet officials were projecting an all-time-record harvest. This was not just idle talk from Moscow: large quantities of wheat, barley and oats—embarrassingly large quantities—had begun sprouting up in the Soviet grain belt, a bounty confirmed by U.S. satellite photographs.

The immediate problem for big media (the *Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*) was reconciling this surprise cornucopia with the impending

Soviet famine they were so graphically depicting. The obvious solution for reporters in the field was to claim that the size of the crop was irrelevant because the "feckless Soviet agriculture system" (as the *Times* put it) lacked the wherewithal to harvest it. Wellesley College Sovietologist Marshall Goldman had already provided the deus ex machina in the *Journal*. He explained that it would be "difficult to bring in what otherwise was expected to be a good harvest," because Soviet tractors lacked tires, and "those farmers with [usable] tractors find themselves short of diesel fuel." The *Times*'s Bill Keller took Goldman's line a step farther in his story headlined FROM STATE PRICING TO STOOP LABOR, SOVIET SYSTEM DOOMS A BUMPER CROP. Keller reported that desperate Soviet efforts at preventing the bountiful harvest from "spoiling on the ground"—efforts such as mobilizing 100,000 Russian troops to help with the harvest—were all "apparently to little avail."


By November the image of the rotting Soviet harvest was muddled by those same unmotivated Soviet farmers, who with their tire-free, fuelless tractors nevertheless reaped the biggest harvest in the history of the Soviet Union—or of czarist Russia, for that matter. They delivered to weighing stations more than 240 million tons of grain. This included 108 million tons of wheat, more than half again what American farmers managed to bring in. Additionally, "inefficient" Soviet wheat-farm workers got approximately the same yield *per acre* as their efficient capitalist counterparts did here in the United States.

What happened when news of this record harvest went out over the Reuters News Service in early November? The *Times*, the *Journal*, the *Post* and other gatekeepers of the American press chose simply to ignore it. As much as they enjoy marveling over new records (air-crash fatalities, the New York murder rate), they were not about to report that the farmers they had so assiduously portrayed as lacking workable tractors, fuel and incentive had managed to haul in nearly a quarter billion tons of grain. And when President Mikhail Gorbachev noted in his State of the Union speech that Soviet farmers had harvested 23 million tons more than they had

the preceding year (actually, it was closer to 29 million), the American press all but expunged his comment from their reports as news not fit to print. (One *Times* editor I spoke to dismissed the Soviet record as a "fluke"—a criterion that would also presumably exclude from the paper's news pages earthquakes, sales of Van Goghs to Japanese for high-eight-figure sums and similar onetime news occurrences, not to mention a certain type of parasitic flatworm.)

In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soviet farmers actually delivered 10 million more tons of grain in 1990 than they had in 1989. This boost accounted for a reduced need for Russian wheat imports, as confirmed by plunging world wheat prices. So much for the putative famine.

The reason for bread lines at state stores in Moscow, and for food rationing, is that Soviet prices are kept too low. Imagine the bread lines that would form at Zabar's in New York if the government ordered the store to reduce the price of its sourdough from \$1.79 to 25 cents a loaf. Eventually, of course, Zabar's would run out of bread. Or it would have to institute ration coupons. Which is essentially what happened in the Soviet Union's subsidized food stores. At the pricier, unregulated farmers' markets, there is, as even the *Times* acknowledges, an "abundance" of food. And shorter lines. Sure, farmers prefer to sell their food for higher prices, but that is called a market economy.

In a final absurd fillip to the famine hype, the U.S. effectively bribed the Soviets into supporting its United Nations resolution for an American war with Iraq by pressuring Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates to lend them \$3 billion. When the Soviets sent out a random plea for aid (what's the risk in asking?), President Bush promised another billion in U.S. agriculture loans, for a total of \$4 billion. Which, if the Soviets chose to spend it in this country at current prices (\$87 per ton), would enable them to buy almost two-thirds of the U.S. wheat harvest. Which would, of course, cause bread lines and rationing here. Now, that would be a story the American media could really get their teeth into. 

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AN INNOCENT MAN

*Most fans think Billy Joel's a
romantic, but his handlers know
he's just naive*

BY FRED GOODMAN

Rock 'n' roll has throughout its history had more than its share of poseurs. That's why it's refreshing to see that Billy Joel—his marriage to Christie Brinkley and his big houses in Colts Neck and East Hampton notwithstanding—is really the regular guy that his songs and videos suggest him to be. And unlike so many selfish rockers who limit their charitable efforts to the hot cause of the moment, Joel—who recently took the opportunity to describe himself in court documents as an “enormously successful composer, performer, recording artist and international star of the first rank”—has magnanimously turned his money over to just about anyone who, it seems, has had the chutzpah to take it. Prominent among this group have been his own managers.

The first beneficiary of Joel's largess was Artie Ripp, a street-savvy New York record man who signed Joel to a recording-and-publishing deal in 1971, when the singer was 22. Ripp's Family Productions, which was backed by Gulf + Western, released Joel's first solo album, *Cold Spring Harbor* (Joel had previously appeared on three albums, two fronting a Long Island bar band called the Hassles, the third as half of a psychedelic

duo known as Attila, whose album cover required Joel and his partner to dress as Huns and stand amid sides of beef in a meat locker). *Cold Spring Harbor* bombed, mostly because the recordings were sped up in the mastering process, leaving Joel sounding like a Muppet Baby.

But if Ripp had no luck in cutting an album, he certainly knew how to cut a deal. Though he parted with Gulf + Western, he continued to keep Joel signed to his production-and-publishing company. When the president of Columbia Records, Clive Davis, in one of his last acts before being fired amid charges of misappropriating funds, offered Joel a contract, it proved impossible to exclude Ripp.

“You wanna say Artie Ripp had a very strong contract?” Ripp asks today. “There was nothing wrong with it, man. If there was something legally wrong with my position, Columbia Records and Billy Joel would have had me the fuck out of there in a day. You think Clive Davis wanted me there? Or that Columbia wanted to pay me what they had to pay me?” Their recommendation, Ripp says, would have been to “shoot the cocksucker.”

Ripp, who says he spent \$450,000 developing Joel, won't divulge the details of what it cost Joel to buy out his contract. But it was almost certainly in the tens of millions. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, Joel's first album for Columbia, *Piano Man*, sold more than 3 million copies in the United States alone, but other sources show that Joel himself realized less than \$8,000. Even after Joel regained control of his publishing, Ripp continued to benefit, getting a piece of each of Joel's albums through his 1986 release, *The Bridge*. “I love this guy from my heart and soul—and pocket,” says Ripp.

Reeling from this deal, Joel asked someone closer to him—his wife, Elizabeth Weber—to handle his business affairs. An alumna of the UCLA Graduate School of Management, Weber proved to be a savvy businesswoman. Unfortunately for Joel, it was when their marriage fell apart, in the late seventies, that Weber proved savviest. Though the couple hadn't signed a prenuptial agreement, Joel was ready to

do the right thing, and when Weber asked him to split their assets equally, he readily signed the papers. He also agreed to be represented by an attorney, Ron Williams, who had been introduced to him by Weber.

In a deposition for a lawsuit Weber filed against him, Joel demonstrated his acumen. “I believe he kind of explained what it was,” Joel testified, describing how Williams negotiated the contract. “I think what had happened, Elizabeth handed me a thing, a contract, and I sat with Ron Williams, and he explained what every paragraph meant.” Joel offered no indication that either he or Williams tried to negotiate any changes. Williams then disappeared from Joel's life.

Judging by subsequent suits, it appears that Joel and Weber's fifty-fifty split continues to cover all work done by Joel while he and Weber were married. As part of the settlement of those suits, Weber will also earn nearly \$2-million for consulting services.

A lesser man in the midst of a divorce might have decided that he had done enough for his departing wife's family. Not Billy Joel. To replace Weber, Joel turned to one of her employees: her brother. According to court documents, Elizabeth hired Frank Weber in 1978 to help make investment and business decisions. Two years later he became Joel's manager; his initial contract provided that he would receive 15 percent of all of Joel's income—a reasonable and standard figure that would later increase. The agreement also gave him power of attorney.

Let's step back for a moment. Imagine that it's 1983, and that Billy Joel, enjoying the whopping record-royalty rate of 37 percent of the wholesale price, will sell 5 million copies of his new album. If, for the sake of argument, we assume that his 37 percent equals \$1.75 an album, then Columbia Records should send him a check for \$8.75 million. Let's guess that Artie Ripp gets 25 percent off the top; that leaves about \$6.5 million. Ex-brother-in-law Frank gets 15 percent—about \$1 million. Ex-wife Elizabeth gets 50 percent of what's left. Billy, by this informed estimate, will get to keep \$2.75 million before the IRS takes its share.

UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS

4. "Castle keeps" are dungeons, or *dung* unto *cons*.

10. E, for *east*, and *Pakistan* rearranged ("exotic"). I must confess that I originally had in mind a clue that involved a Japanese person, but that would have been ethno-offensive. In our intercourse with foreign peoples, let us neither kowtow nor slur.

11. Alan Freed was a famous 1950s disc jockey.

13. *Beasts* around *r*, which is the "head" of *red*. *Bosom* singular may refer to *breasts* plural. A nice word, *bosom*, and I hope this clue doesn't rankle in anyone's. A cruder cruciverbalist might have used *booters*. In point of fact, there is a chain of restaurants across the United States called Hooters. The female servingpersons wear tight T-shirts. Much as it bothers me that you can't just come out and refer openly to pedal extremities in China, I hope that nation never has a chain of restaurants called Feet. *Cruciverbalist*, I should mention, is the word for crossword-puzzle constructors. Recently cruciverbalists from around the country gathered in the first meeting of the American Crossword Puzzle Academy and Hall of Fame. What the 170 members of the academy want most is respect, according to *The New York Times's* coverage of the event. A good thing I wasn't invited, then, because I would probably have worn all the wrong clothes (well, not *all* the wrong clothes), said all the wrong things. For all I know, you're not supposed to say "feet" around cruciverbalists. William Lutwiniak, co-editor of the *The Washington Post Sunday* magazine's puzzle, told the *Times* he had to rebuild someone's puzzle from scratch "because the guy had worked in the phrase *peace plan*," which Lutwiniak couldn't find in a dictionary. This strikes me as insane.

15. A "whore's performance" is a *trick*, and "came first" is *led*.

23. The first letters ("leaders") of *old central European allies now in agreement*.

29. A usurer is he (or, to be sure, she) who takes too much interest. He is to be found in *us* plus the last 44.4 percent of *treasurer*.

DOWN

2. A *merkin* is a sort of body toupee.

3. The 2 Live Crew album was *As Nasty As They Wanna Be*, and the World Champion Cincinnati Reds' relief pitchers call themselves the Nasty Boys. Much as I support the rights of 2 Live Crew and the Nasty Boys to fling oppressive macho remarks and wicked macho sliders, respectively, I am not a fan of either the Reds (whose city's art museum was prosecuted) or the Crew. When it comes to baseball players, I root for artful performers like Dennis Eckersley, Rickey Henderson, Carney Lansford (a specialist in singles off the handle of the bat) and Dave Stewart. When it comes to entertainers, I root for those who get down into nastiness and transcend it, as Richard Pryor did in his prime. He didn't need a critic to come along behind him and explain.

5. According to *Millie's Book* (supposedly dictated by the Bushes' dog to Mrs. Bush, though you know and I know that neither the dog nor the first lady actually writes), the Bushes sleep with their dog. Their dog wakes them in the morning by flapping its ears in their faces. Presumably this makes the Bushes seem down-to-earth. But people who are actually down-to-earth don't sleep with dogs. People who are actually down-to-earth wouldn't keep a dog that smelled unearthy enough to sleep with.

6. *GA* is a state, the abbreviation of *fast forward* is *FF*, and the middle of *bed* is *e*. An interesting thing about Reagan is that none of the silly and offensive statements *he* let slip ever caused much of a flap. When a gaffer makes a gaffe, it isn't news.

19. The word for one syllable is *monosyllable*, but there is no single word for "one word." (There is no synonym for *word*, either. Something to think about.) *Term* is a word for a word or phrase, and the shortest term is one word. *One word* is the same length (two words long) as *this is*, yet twice as long as *this*.

21. *Over after lex* rearranged. ♪



Which brings us to the matter of tax shelters. Looking over the investments Frank chose for Joel, there seem to be a large number of oil and gas ventures, horse-breeding partnerships and real estate partnerships—all of which let you keep more of your money by deducting losses.

Now, the relationship between manager and rock 'n' roll artist has traditionally been a close one. But Billy Joel delegated power to Frank Weber that Elvis's Colonel Tom Parker and the Beatles' Allen Klein only dreamed about. Not only did Joel trust Frank to handle his money, but he made Frank executor of his will and godfather of his daughter.

In a sworn deposition in 1988, Joel noted that he had never bothered to have the financial information Frank gave him checked by an outside accountant. He said he had never kept abreast of how much he was worth, didn't know what his money was invested in, wasn't sure if Frank could make investments for him without his consent, had never checked Frank's commission claims and had no idea how much money Frank was taking for himself. He did, however, repeatedly say he trusted Frank completely. Perhaps most interesting, Joel said he had never rejected an investment Frank had proposed to him—and, conversely, Frank had never put Joel's money into any of the investments the singer had suggested. "None of my ideas were any good," said Joel, probably without undue self-deprecation. An example of Joel's own investment schemes: "I always wanted to have a restaurant and walk around and kind of say hi to people and buy them a glass of wine."

Keeping Joel from acting on his own occasional business impulses may have been Frank Weber's greatest service to Joel; indeed, it may have been his *only* service. When asked if Frank had ever provided him with in-depth financial data, the artist replied that Frank had a "huge book with a lot of detail in it, and when Frank has tried to take me through the book, my eyes start to glaze over."

Eventually, bad news came: the IRS disallowed Joel's tax shelters, and Elizabeth Weber complained that Frank wouldn't pay the next installment on

what Joel owed her. A few weeks later, Joel hired Ernst & Young to conduct what was apparently the first outside audit of Frank's books.

The result was a \$90 million lawsuit by Billy Joel against Frank Weber, charging misconduct, fraud and breaches of contract and fiduciary duty. Among the highlights of the suit were allegations—which Frank has denied—that Frank had used Joel's money to provide himself and his wife with hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest-free loans; had misused his power of attorney to commit millions of dollars of Joel's money to investments and partnerships in which Frank had a personal interest; had deliberately overcharged Joel for the production of his own videos; had taken more money from some of Joel's music than Joel had himself received; and had induced Joel to sign a succession of "one-sided and unfair" management agreements. Frank's investments, Joel says now, lost "not less than \$10 million."

So far, a court has ruled that Frank must repay about \$2 million worth of loans, with the other issues to be decided. But it seems unlikely that Joel will collect much, as Frank has filed for bankruptcy.

As you might expect, Joel has hired a new manager. And while you might assume that Joel would have scoured the earth to find new management—the way any disillusioned, frequently cheated person would—you'd be wrong. Instead, Joel went out and hired a guy who used to work for Frank.

Of course, the people who love Joel best are pulling for him. "He's a successful man," says Artie Ripp. "He got everything he wanted. He also got violated, okay? Underneath the man and underneath the artist there's a fucking kid. There's a child. But I'm happy about one thing: the man has money, and God bless him that he had a career resurgence and that he has a company that believes in him and newfound fans...I hope that every time we see one another we can walk towards one another, give one another a hug, give one another a kiss and say, 'Hey, man, it's nice to see ya.'"

Here's hoping that Christie has her own accounts. ☛

RUG

MERCHANT

*Up close and personal
with Mr. Hair Club for Men*

BY JIMMY GUTERMAN



I am pulling Sy Sperling's hair.

Thirteen flights above Madison Avenue, the founder of Hair Club for Men submits to this gentle humiliation to **HAIR CARE** prove a point: not only does his exclusive Strand-by-Strand method of hair weaving permit bald men to regain confidence, but the full head of hair you get isn't going anywhere.

The 49-year-old Sperling, of course, has become quasi-famous through his television ads. "We don't believe hair makes the man," he says on one of those ads. "The potential is already there. We just help you find out who you are." Most of America knows what comes next: Sperling stares at the camera and delivers in an artless New York monotone the line that has made him America's best-known player in hair replacement: "I'm not only the Hair Club president, I'm also a client."

At the moment he is proclaiming this, Sperling displays a photograph of himself taken before he stumbled upon the miracle of Strand-by-Strand. The old Sy has much in common with the new Sy—a convincing smile, a predilection for dark, conservative suits and red ties—but we see an emptiness in him. The old Sy is heavy-lidded, puffy, and his most distinguishing feature is a vast, shiny forehead. When we see the two Sys, we see a confident, full-haired man holding a photograph of a balding wan-

derer who has yet to find meaning.

That bright, shiny forehead is only a memory as I attempt to dislodge Sperling's hair weave. I move the moussed hair around, even tug it a bit, but it's holding firm. The replaced hair is harsher than Sperling's genuine side tufts, but that's not obvious unless you're trying to pull his hair off. This is believable hair. When Sperling has had enough, he lifts his head, pats down his ruffled strands and smiles broadly. "Not bad, huh?" he says. "It really is an amazing transformation."

More than 20,000 customers agree. "We're living in a cosmetic society," Sperling says, fingering a wedding ring that's more than half an inch thick. "A man is very sensitive about going into a hair-replacement clinic. I didn't want the name of the company to expose the problem. It's like calling a place the Missing-Arm Clinic." Hence the far more discreet, far classier Hair Club for Men.

At Club headquarters, Sperling's 25-year-old daughter, Shari, is taking us on a nostalgic journey through her father's early years: his childhood in the Bronx, his Air Force service in the 1950s, his days as a young husband with a family to support. One of two children from Sperling's first marriage, Shari works at the Club. Thin and fair-haired (her own), soft-spoken yet enthusiastic, Shari serves as Sy Sperling's most deeply understanding supporter. "Sy, you were a plugger, weren't you?" she says to her father. "When I was born, Sy was in his third year of college. My mother had gotten pregnant. They weren't married, but they got married as soon as they found out. This may sound funny, but he was actually selling carpeting. On my birth certificate, under FATHER'S OCCUPATION, it says 'carpet salesman.'"

Sperling credits his subsequent success as much to street smarts as to formal education: "If I didn't have the savvy from growing up in the South Bronx, I wouldn't be successful today. I can relate to anybody on any level. I can go on a subway and relate to people."

"Sy's cool," Shari confirms. "Sy's very cool."

"Say someone walks up to me in the street," Sperling says. "The guy may look a little suspicious. He looks at me, and I look at him. He won't bother me."

There's a certain street savvy that I have. It's like an unwritten law. Various forms of species don't harm other members of their own species, even on the street."

"He's loose," Shari offers.

"I am loose," Sperling agrees. "Really. I'm really serious."

Maybe too loose. One former franchisee is currently suing Sperling, alleging that he allowed a franchise to fall apart. Sperling has denied this claim. In recent years several longtime associates have left the company. Says one, "It lost its personal touch."

This would be a serious loss, given that Sperling's interest in hair replacement sprang from his desire to replace his own thinning hair after his divorce. "A toupee I didn't want to do, because it's removable," he says. "As a younger, single man, I was very insecure with the idea of removing my hair during intimacy. So I chose to do a weave. I asked the guy if I could shampoo with it. He said, 'No problem. It's just like your own hair.' As soon as I got home, I couldn't wait to get into the shower. I was singing. I was excited. And then it tangled into a ball."

Fortunately, Sperling didn't quit, and the hair weaver eventually gave him something that worked. "When I had my hair right," Sperling remembers, "it changed the way I looked at myself. I lost 30 pounds. I went on a singles weekend to Grossinger's. I felt very self-confident for the first time in years. People in the psychology field have told me that what we're able to do to a person's head from the outside in a matter of two hours is more than they can do in a ten-year period." Sperling and the weaver made a deal that would allow Sperling to spread psychological well-being across the land.

Hair Club has grown far beyond its low-rent origins (there are 280 locations generating annual sales of \$30 million), and Sperling, in his low-key way, relishes his newfound celebrity. He talks proudly of showing the film *Amazon Women on the Moon*, which features a brief parody of Sperling involving a staple gun and a carpet remnant, at a recent office party.

"I enjoy the celebrity," he says. "Did you know I have a fan club in Boston? They made T-shirts."

The suggestion that the fan reaction was perhaps more of a camp exercise than true idol worship is shrugged off. "Nah, it was serious," Sperling says. "It was one of the universities up there. They were serious."

"It might be a little tongue-in-cheek," Shari suggests.

Cautiously, Sperling backs down. "It could be," he says.

"I had this friend who invited me to her wedding," Shari says. "She had these friends there who were these very bohemian East Village avant-garde types, and they all came up to me and said, 'We heard you're Sy Sperling's daughter.' I said, 'That's right, I am. I'm proud of it.' They said, 'He's our cult icon figure.'"

Soon we stopped discussing Sperling's celebrity and began discussing the celebrities he's met. "Rudolph Giuliani doesn't wear a toupee," he says with authority. "That's his own hair. He grows it very long on the sides, and he combs it over and he sprays it. The hair is sprayed until it's like a rock, so it actually acts like a toupee. I spoke to Giuliani for about a half hour once. I met him at St. Patrick's Cathedral. My wife goes with me to temple on Yom Kippur, and I go to church with her to St. Patty's on Christmas Eve. After the service we were invited to this little party in back. He recognized me right away."

"So did Paul Simon," Shari attests.

"Paul Simon wears something," Sperling says. "I was at a concert at Radio City. I said, 'Aren't you Paul Simon? I'm a big fan of yours.' He said, 'You're Sy Sperling.' He knew who I was. Paul wears something."

"So does Burt Reynolds," Shari says.

"Oh, yeah," Sperling says. "Everyone knows that."

"I heard Burt Reynolds spent \$25,000 on what he has on his head," Shari says.

"I can't imagine any hair replacement in the world that would be worth that much," Sperling says. "I heard he spent five dollars on it." He looks me square in the eye. "Please, let the world know *we don't do Burt Reynolds*."

His gaze moves toward the top of my head. "Now that you've seen how good a job we've done on my hair," he says, walking toward me, "let's take a look at yours." ☺

FREE SPEECH,

MY FOOT!

*Must foreign entanglements cut us
off at the ankles?*



The redundantly named Lucky Roosevelt, who was Reagan's chief of protocol, has authored a book containing this

THE UN-
BRITISH
CROSSWORD
PUZZLE

revelation: "Apparently in China it is a faux pas to talk about feet."

It is not, however, a faux pas in China to shoot college students. To be fair, it is probably not acceptable in China for students to be shot by foreigners; but feet, we are led to believe, are better left undiscussed in China, or with Chinese visitors here.

Well, I'm sorry. I'd like to visit China myself, but if someone at the border asks me, in a roundabout way, whether I intend to get into the area of feet, I don't feel I can rule it out. If Chinese people themselves don't want to talk about feet, fine. But I am an American. I am more than willing not to bring up *bound* feet. Or anyone's mother's feet, say. But what if mine hurt? Is it unheard-of for a visitor to find that a Chinese person is standing on one of his or her feet? In that case, surely, all bets are off.

The first time a friend of mine was allowed to help her mother serve coffee at a party, her mother made it very clear that she was not to mention Mrs. Ogle's nose, which had been getting gradually lower on one side than the other, for some reason, over the years. Suddenly my friend heard herself (with, I am inclined to believe, some satisfac-

tion) saying in her most mannerly voice, "Would you like some sugar in your nose, Mrs. Ogle?" In China I might be that way with feet: "In my country we have an old football expression — whoops. I guess I've put my foot in my — whoops."

How can they *never* talk about feet? How do they buy shoes? Over the centuries, presumably, they have worked out euphemisms, little knowing looks, traditional ways of tiptoeing around feet. ("Pardon me, Mr. Ambassador, you seem to have put your you-know-what in some dog shit.") But I am not at all ashamed to say that in this country we haven't.

In fact, no less an authority than *The New York Times* reported not long ago that "references to men's genitals — their images and functions — have been permeating the popular culture." And you're telling me the Chinese won't talk about *feet*?

In the Persian Gulf there are different taboos. The Pentagon has advised American servicepersons not to talk to Arabs about heterosexual dancing, Christianity (as in "Where in Christ's

no one expects them to defend their own borders? Couldn't they afford enough radar or spies to warn themselves that the Iraqis were coming? I guess they exhausted their resources protecting themselves against *discussion*, even, of the lambada, ecclesiastical hats and Barbra Streisand. The massive American presence in the Middle East ought to be on this basis: Here we are, and we talk about *anything*.

The world, I realize, is not one big Sally Jessy Raphaël show. Someone told me about an African boat trip on which several devoutly religious men who were fasting wouldn't even swallow their saliva, so they spat constantly, on some bags of dates the boat was transporting. My friend didn't seize the opportunity to discuss this with them. When in Rome, I might in fact avoid the subject of ecclesiastical hats. Unless I were officially instructed by my government to avoid it, in which case I'd feel patriotically obliged to say, "How can the American Way be reconciled with such instructions, and how can Jesus *possibly* have inspired those hats?"

I speak of the American Way. And yet Lucky Roosevelt tells us that she, who favors abortion rights, never got up the nerve to raise the issue with the anti-choice president she chose to serve for seven years: "Truthfully, I couldn't imagine ever raising an unpleasant subject with Ronald Reagan." Not even "Some sugar in your brain, Mr. President?"

ACROSS

.....

1. Give displeasure away before finale. (6)

4. Castle keeps manure unto ages. (8)

10. Has a drink in exotic East (Pakistan). (5,1,3)

11. Liberated deejay. (5)

12. Spoiled aspect is out of line. (7)

13. Bosom brings animals around redhead. (7)

14. Noncom rages incoherently. (5)

15. Went down as Reaganomic benefits were supposed to — whose performance came first. (8)

18. Wild frost! Ooh! Sure! (8)

20. Bit of drama with Bo back on top would be dirty. (5)

23. Leaders of old central European allies now in agreement on Pacific islands. (7)

25. Oaf gives me blurb, awkwardly. (7)

26. Civil War expert would presumably have to go incognito around Chinese. (5)

27. Confederate general and imaginary rabbit make up two-thirds of the plot, according to the Warren report. (3,6)

28. In part the problem of Lendl, essentially, is

never over. (7)

29. He takes too much interest in us — treasurer taking 55.6 percent off the top. (6)

DOWN

.....

1. Privy to unconscious branch of Congress. (8)

2. Mock mink merkin. (4,3)

3. Special quality of 2 Live Crew and Cincinnati boys. (9)

5. Bush pun liable, oddly, to be unfit for print. (13)

6. State "Fast forward!" on middle of bed — regrettably, it slips out. (5)

7. Notice too much to supervise? (7)

8. Ms. Ida's turned to cruel kicks. (6)

9. Nation's blue men wild for undies of yesteryear. (14)

16. In China, a euphemism for "Kiss my foot!" (4,2,3)

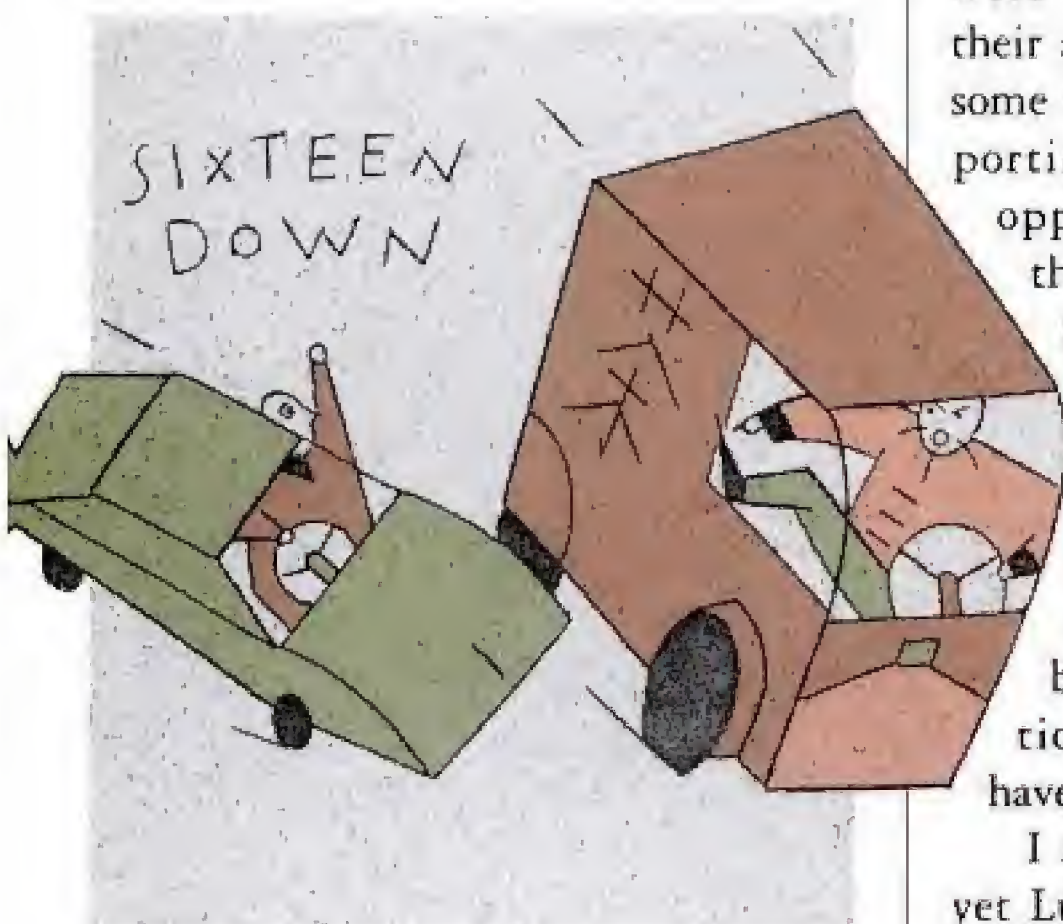
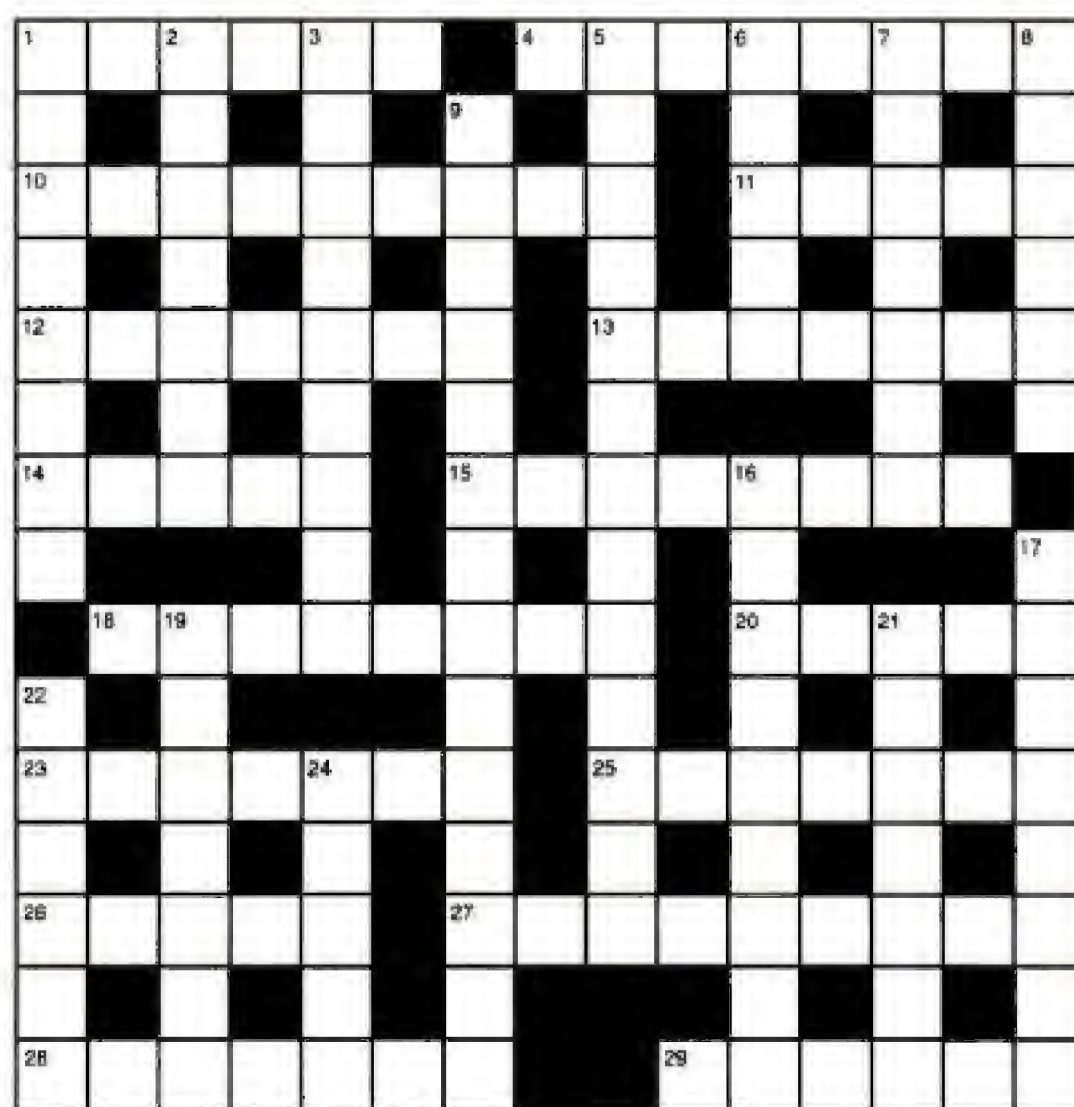
17. Judas puts receptacle in suds. (8)

19. This, the shortest term for the shortest term, is the same length as this is, yet twice as long as this. (3,4)

21. Old flame's finished after change in Roman law. (2-5)

22. Something sweet made of feet, oddly. (6)

24. Sounds like French resort to sibling's daughter. (5)



name can I go to find a little heterosexual dancing?" or anything Jewish.

This is the new world order? If Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and all those other oil nations over there are so quick to take offense, and so rich, how come

Answers appear on page 74.



OPEN SESAME At an AIDS benefit, supermodel and nascent children's-book author Paula Porizkova shows off one of those neat professional-modeling secrets: how to insert a canapé into your mouth without smudging your lipstick!

WHAT SETS MAN APART FROM ANIMALS IS HIS ABILITY TO ACCESSORIZE Let's see what some celebrated people are doing to make themselves stand out *even more* in a crowd. (1) No chance of not being noticed at MoMA when you're wearing your Gumby-head toque, eh, Sigourney? (2-3) And who could fail to be riveted by Georgette Mosbacher's collection of pins and earrings that look like they belong to a perky 14-year-old girl? (4) Designer Donna Karan finds that *her* earrings, apparently cadged from one of those executive-desktop momentum machines, always make a stir, as do (5) the formerly lithe Mary Tyler Moore's newest additions. (6) Sometimes, however, the most effective way to stand out is to shun any ornamentation whatsoever. At Knopf's 75th-anniversary party, *New Yorker* editor Bob Gottlieb, who has got a lot of mileage out of his refusal to wear a necktie, extends his noble-savage shtick—no tie, no belt, no comb, no handkerchief.



Figuring some limo driver has blocked his path, Donald Trump shoves former police commissioner Ben Ward to the left as he makes his way to his big, shiny Trumpmobile after leaving a performance of *Jackie Mason Brand New* on Broadway.



On their way into the Los Angeles premiere of the very long seventies-style western *Dances With Wolves*, Dan Aykroyd and his wife, Donna Dixon, thoughtfully took a secret shortcut through the bushes, lest a more ostentatious and conventional entrance should prompt paparazzi to abandon Kevin Costner, the film's star. Who says Hollywood's a heartless town?



SOCIAL SECURITY Basking in their proximity to Martha Graham—the celebrated grande dame of dance—singer-dancer-businesswoman Madonna and horrible-TV-ad producer Calvin Klein hang on the ancient choreographer's every word.





2

SUCCESSFUL DATING—THE GEORGE WILL WAY Here's how: After taking a younger woman to a swanky Virginia steeplechase, (1) bury yourself in the details of the program or other dull reading material.

(2) Completely ignored, your date is sure not to bother you with boring, non-Beltway-obsessed small talk.

At the Washington premiere of the very long seventies-style western *Dances With Wolves*, the film's star and director, Kevin "Me, Myself and I" Costner, thoughtfully created a human shield between the nobodies and his handler, Hollywood despot Mike Ovitz.



CORRECTION Last month in this space, SPY offered tips to abnormally small celebrities on how to appear taller in photographs. "If your companion is noticeably taller than you," we suggested, "instruct him or her to stay several feet behind you at all times." A photo of teeny



socialite-war criminal Henry Kissinger and his giantess wife, Nancy, was offered by way of illustration. Although SPY cannot be held responsible, we reluctantly admit that the method is not fool-proof—as is evident in the photograph at left of improbably super-rich actor Danny DeVito and his *Other People's Money* costar, Penelope Ann Miller. SPY regrets the error.



THE INVISIBLE WOMAN Ultraprofessional pornography merchant Amanda "Binky" Urban tries not to panic at the

Spirit of Liberty Awards at the Waldorf as she is entirely ignored by Mr. Blythe Danner on her right and by Ben Bradlee on her left.

A still from 1999: *Casinos of the Fourth Reich*, our blockbuster-fin-de-siècle-novel-in-the-making? Marla Maples, Don Kirshner, Marla Maples's mom and Joey Ramone judge a rock 'n' roll talent show at the Ritz.



"SO THE SECOND MORON SAID..."

After dutifully playing court jester to S. I. Newhouse at Knopf's 75th-anniversary party, literary ten-percenter Andrew Wylie (*right*) demonstrates why he is the most respected agent in book publishing.

WHAT DO WOMEN WANT? From the ecstatic expression on the face of a young woman named Pamela Gross as she nuzzles New York's stupid senator, Al D'Amato, the answer seems to be: A bald, squawking freelance foreign-policy meddler with a wide circle of highly unsavory friends.



Oval Office Diary

Notes Toward a Nonfiction Novel

TRANSCRIPTION OF GHWB DICTAPHONE RECORDING 138-0191

--said all right, Bar. In just a minute. Gotta do the book--the notes--first. And they don't stick to the inside of the pockets, anyway, even if they were used. And if they do, they come right off. Just a little lint near the hole. Dear Dicta--ah--phone.

Using the--the jet a lot. And I love that. Up there, 13 hours and you don't have to land, love that. First the Thanksgiving thing--Paris, Geneva, fine, but in the middle, that Jidda-Dhahran-Cairo--golly! Talk about hating to come back to earth. Nothing in the desert but heat and dry turkey, and there's never enough snacks, and every day [door slams] every day Bar is dressed up in yards and yards of brown camouflage gear--like she's not gonna turn up on all the radar anyway. And that darn hat they made me wear--just stuck it in my pocket, and if Ailes and Rogich saw that that was what I did, I don't care. Liked the desert boots, though. Liked throwing the presidential tie clips. Would have liked to throw a tie clip at every single American troop. And even if it was a female troop, she could just put it in her hair, make a bracelet. Paris--better. Couple of snafus. First, the door handles kept coming off the limo--one. (I mean, you reach, and you're president, and suddenly the car is not attached.) And the dinner with--this is two--Gorby at the ambassador's, with the lights suddenly pffft. (And Bar--Smith College City now--kicks me in the dark and says, You're still eating, I can hear you. When it was Gorbachev, and my fork is even down. Still like him, though. But every time I ask a favor, support a little embargo or something, Mr. Nobel Peace Prize decides he wants all our wheat. And Assad--Hafez? Heifetz?--him too. Met him at that motel--Geneva, same trip, door handles working--so I make a joke about vibrating beds. But nada. Doesn't laugh--not even his translator laughs.)

So then a layover in Washington--and then--love that plane--marvelous Mehico. And now, here's the thing: local rodeo (dinky), over at Salinas's hometown. Okay, who is there--with President Salinas? His--ah--friend, is who. And, yep, Mrs. Salinas. Bar--even if she--well, Bar was there, but if not, or--or if--would she let me bring--you see what I mean? Never, never. No way, José. I mean, good for him--wears the matador pants in his Casa Blanca. Sent Bar home after that, no South America for her. Not gonna risk it--turn around and suddenly she's in some native striped poncho or what have you. (Like to see Sununu in one of those, though. Lemme say, I like Sununu. Yeah, I know Sam Skinner wants his job, and Jimmy always saying watch out for Fat Boy. It's one of his divisionary things, I think, and that's exactly why--like with Quayle, it's worth it just to--worth that he is around--Sununu--just 'cause it ticks Jimmy off. Exactly.)

Kind of--gotta be honest--bent out about all of these travel cancellations. The Christmas quail shoot, finito. Just because Roger and Sig and Jim decide no-can-do after the powerboating last summer, and the golf cart, up at Walker's Point. Top of that, the Moscow trip is iffy, and I am piqued. Coulda had a great, great start in '91, on the air-miles thing, on breaking the Air Force One record. Feel like banging around some tennis balls, but guess I better clean those mints out of my coat pockets before Bar goes to DefCon Two.

GHWB:gk

January 1, 1991



COLLEZIONE

BLOOMINGDALE'S

CANADIANS

DJ'S

JEAN COUNTRY

MACY'S

MERRY GO ROUND

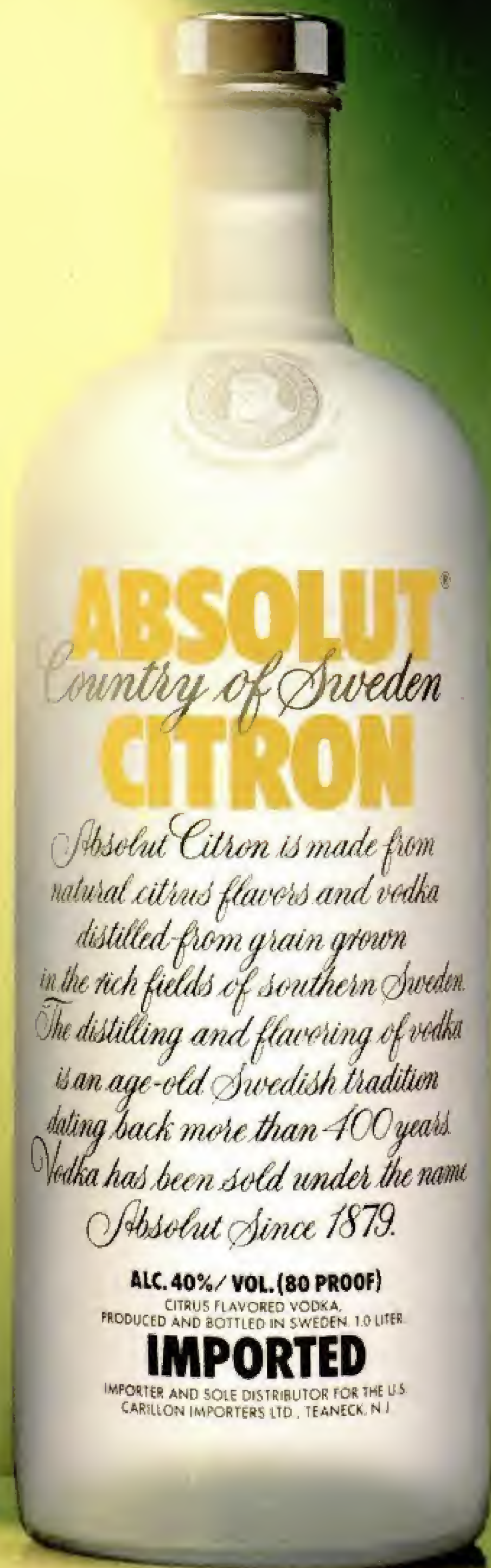
SAKS FIFTH AVENUE



When your heart tells you what to wear.

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